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PART VI.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS

OF

ASIATIC TURKEY AND ARABIA.

April to June 1912.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

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[These Papers should have appeared as No. 116* in Part V.]

[12338]

Papers communicated by the Turkish Embassy, March 20, 1912.

(1.)

Troisième Convention additionnelle à la Convention du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, en date du 20 février, 1318 (5 mars, 1903).

LE Gouvernement Impérial ottoman, représenté par son Altesse Hakki Pacha, Grand Vizir et Ministre par intérim du Commerce et des Travaux publics, d'une part, et la Société Impériale ottomane du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, dénommée ci-après "la société," représentée par M. Edouard Huguenin, administrateur-délégué de ladite société, d'autre part, sont convenus de ce qui suit :—

ARTICLE 1er.

Le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman décide la continuation jusqu'à la ville de Bagdad, soit sur une nouvelle longueur d'environ 600 kilom., de la construction du prolongement Boulgourlou–Hélif ayant fait l'objet de la première convention additionnelle à la Convention du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad du 20 mai, 1324 (2 juin, 1908).

ARTICLE 2.

La société renonce à ses droits à l'affectation de nouvelles ressources de l'Etat, et ce aussi bien pour l'annuité que pour le forfait d'exploitation fixés par l'article 35 de la convention du 20 février, 1318 (5 mars, 1903), du chef de la construction et de l'exploitation du prolongement de Hélif jusqu'à Bagdad, dont la longueur effective sera établie par les études définitives à exécuter.

Les sommes lui revenant en vertu du susdit article 35 lui seront donc payées—

1. Sur les excédents des recettes nettes de la Dette publique ottomane revenant au Gouvernement Impérial ottoman selon l'article 7 du décret-annexe au décret du 28 Mouharrem, 1299, déduction faite du produit de la surtaxe douanière de 3 pour cent, étant bien entendu que la société renonce également à tous ses droits découlant de conventions antérieures, sur le produit de la nouvelle surtaxe douanière de 4 pour cent que le Gouvernement se propose d'introduire.

2. Sur les excédents des dîmes affectées aux garanties kilométriques des lignes du Chemin de Fer ottoman d'Anatolie, ainsi qu'à la première section de 200 kilom. du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad.

ARTICLE 3.

Les plans et projets de la ligne comprise entre Hélif et Bagdad seront présentés au Ministère du Commerce et des Travaux publics dans le délai d'un an compté à partir de l'échange de la présente convention additionnelle. Le délai pour l'approbation des plans et projets par ledit Ministère sera de deux mois.

ARTICLE 4.

La société aura le droit de demander au Gouvernement Impérial ottoman à tout moment et dès la signature de la présente convention additionnelle la remise, soit séparément, soit ensemble, des séries IV, V et VI de l'emprunt, la valeur nominale de chacune de ces séries étant fixée à 54,000,000 de francs, et elle s'engage à terminer l'ensemble du prolongement jusqu'à Bagdad dans un délai de cinq ans à partir de l'approbation des plans et projets y relatifs.

ARTICLE 5.

Les séries IV, V et VI de l'emprunt seront régies par les dispositions arrêtées dans le contrat du 20 mai, 1324 (2 juin, 1908), pour les séries II et III, étant bien entendu que—

1. La valeur nominale de chacune des nouvelles séries est fixée à 54,000,000 de francs, comme il est dit à l'article 4 de la présente convention additionnelle.

2. Les affectations afférentes au service des nouvelles séries sont celles désignées à l'article 2 de la présente convention additionnelle.

3. La division des nouvelles séries en coupures d'une et de cinq obligations, de même que les échéances des coupons, seront fixées par la société.

ARTICLE 6.

Le prolongement au delà de Boulgourlou jusqu'à Bagdad formant un tout dont l'exécution doit être assurée par le produit total des séries II à VI de l'emprunt, la société au lieu d'appliquer exclusivement au prolongement de Boulgourlou à Hélif, le produit des séries II et III, a d'ores et déjà le droit d'en utiliser ce que de besoin pour commencer soit à Bagdad, soit à tous points quelconques qu'elle jugera utiles, les travaux de construction de prolongement au delà d'Hélif.

La présente convention additionnelle a été, conformément à l'iradé Impérial en date du 6 mars, 1327 (17 Rébiul-Ewel, 1329), faite en double, signée et échangée à Constantinople le 8 (21) mars, 1327 (1911) (19 Rébiul-Ewel, 1329).

HUGUENIN.

(2.)

Le groupe allemand qui a le contrôle financier de la Société du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad est prêt à céder à une société anonyme ottomane, à former, la concession conférée à la Société du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad par la convention du 20 février (2 mars), 1903, pour une section de 400 à 500 kilom. calculés à partir du Golfe Persique, ainsi que pour les ports à établir à Bassora et au Golfe, et ce à des conditions dont les détails seront fixés d'un commun accord entre le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman et la Société du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad. Le susdit groupe allemand déclare d'ores et déjà qu'il est d'accord à ce qu'une large part dans la nouvelle société anonyme ottomane soit réservée à la Turquie, et qu'il ne réclamera pour l'ancienne Société du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad qu'un intérêt de minorité, qui, pourtant, ne serait pas inférieure à la part de n'importe quelle nationalité non ottomane.

D'autre part, il serait réservé à la nouvelle convention de fixer les compensations qui reviendraient à la Société du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad pour l'abandon des avantages pécuniaires et autres que lui assurait la convention actuellement en vigueur.

A. von GWINNER.
HELFFERICH.

Berlin, le 7 mars, 1911.

(3.)

MM. A. von Gwinner et Helfferich, signataires, au nom du groupe allemand qui a le contrôle financier de la Société du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, de la déclaration du 7 mars, 1911, ci-annexée, m'autorisent à déclarer qu'ils acceptent que les mots "pour une section de 400 à 500 kilom. calculés à partir du Golfe Persique," s'interprètent dans le sens de "la section comprise entre Bagdad et le Golfe Persique, soit en totalité, soit en partie."

HUGUENIN.

Constantinople, le 8 (21) *mars*, 1911.

(4.)

Déclaration.

Notre société déclare qu'en ce qui concerne le prolongement de la ligne de Hélif jusqu'à Bagdad elle renonce formellement à tous ses droits découlant de conventions antérieures, sur le produit de droits de patente, si le Gouvernement les met en application.

L'Administrateur-Délégué,
HUGUENIN.

Constantinople, le 8 (21) *mars*, 1911.

Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. August 1912.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia.

PART VI.

[13609] No. 1.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 248. Confidential.)

Sir, *Constantinople, March* 25, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Erzeroum, reporting on the state of affairs at Erzeroum.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Consul McGregor to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 19. Confidential.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, March* 12, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to report that General Emin Pasha, formerly in command of the cavalry at Van, has been appointed commander of the tribal light cavalry, and has taken up his post at Erzeroum.

From a conversation which I have had with him, and also with Emin Pasha, inspector of the cavalry, who has arrived here from Erzinjan, I gather that not much progress, if any, has been made in carrying out the reorganisation scheme, and, in fact the inspector of cavalry informed me that a "second reorganisation" was contemplated. This statement may, I fancy, be taken to mean that the opposition of the Kurds to the new scheme has not been surmounted; and I have reason to believe that the main object of the inspector's visit is to bring about an understanding on this subject.

Although there are at present no new indications of abnormal military activity—unless one regards as such a greater attention to ordinary drill than was customary in former years—the mass of the population here are convinced that war with Russia is inevitable, and recent speeches delivered by members of His Majesty's Government on the subject of Persia are generally interpreted as portending grave events.

The Russian consul-general informs me that the situation continues to cause anxiety at Tiflis, and that for this reason the military secretary of the consulate-general, who was to have gone on leave of absence on the conclusion of his mission in Southern Kurdistan (see my despatch No. 1 of 3rd January), has been instructed to return here as early as possible.

I have also learned confidentially that the leading Russian firm in Erzeroum has been instructed by its principals to collect outstanding debts and to stop all credit.

I have, &c.
P. J. C. McGREGOR.

[13618] No. 2.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 257.)
Sir, *Constantinople, March 26, 1912*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 69 of the 24th instant, I have the honour to report that the Prince of Samos was, according to the press reports received here, assassinated on the 24th instant as he was leaving church in order to return to the palace. The murderer, whose name is given as Stavros Parides, and his nationality as a Greek, fired five shots from his revolver at Prince Kopassis, who fell mortally wounded and succumbed next day. The motive is said to have been one of private revenge for some irregularity in a pending lawsuit. The Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me, however, that the murderer was really a paid hireling and a Hellenic subject. There can be no doubt that the severity of the methods which Prince Kopassis employed in ruling the island and in suppressing all signs of discontent and revolt had made him very unpopular amongst the Greek population, and for this reason it is only natural that the essentially Turkish organs of the local press, such as the "Tanin," in their comments on the crime should greatly deplore the loss of so excellent and "patriotic" a governor, the first of a long series since 1833, who has really made his power and influence felt among the islanders.

The Ottoman Government have without any delay decided upon the nomination, as successor to Prince Kopassis, of Beglery Effendi as Prince of Samos. This officer, who fulfils the requirement of the arrangement with Great Britain, France, and Russia of 1832 of being of the religion of the island of Samos, has had administrative experience at Trebizond, and more recently at Mersina, where he holds the post of governor.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that the selection had been made by Nail Bey, the Minister of Finance, who had spoken very highly of him.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have received a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna, stating that the Prince was shot while walking on the quay at Vathy.

The assassin was arrested at Vlumary, a place half an hour's walk distant from Vathy, in a dying condition, owing to the bullets he had received from the pursuing gendarmes.

He was apparently about 25 years of age, a stranger to the island, and confessed that he was a native of Greece, and had recently come from the Dardanelles with the object of killing the Prince.

This information would seem to confirm the statements of the Minister for Foreign Affairs as reported above.

G. L.

[13624] No. 3.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 263.)
Sir, *Constantinople, March 27, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 255 of the 27th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Jeddah respecting the elections' outlook in the Hedjaz.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 3.

Consul Monahan to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Jeddah, March 7, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to submit the following information about elections in the Hedjaz for the new Parliament.

About eight months ago the clubs of the Committee of Union and Progress died a natural death in Mecca and Jeddah. The club-house in Jeddah was then closed, and the one in Mecca, though not yet closed, has remained empty of members. The members of the Mecca club were about fifty and those of the Jeddah club about twenty in number. Of the military officers, who were more than half of the members of each club, some had left for other parts of the Ottoman Empire, and, of the rest, some Government officials had also left, and the remainder, all Turks resident in Mecca and Jeddah, had ceased to visit the clubs, partly through indifference and partly for fear of the Grand Shereef, who had also deterred the Arabs from becoming members. The club in Mecca had never any political importance, and the results of its activity have been the establishment two and a-half years ago of a municipality which is still, I hear, working well, and the opening about the same time of a free preparatory school, which has, owing to the Grand Shereef's opposition, attracted hitherto very few pupils. The club in Jeddah has done nothing at all. The other party, that of "Union and Liberty" or of "Moderate Liberty," has not made any appearance in the Hedjaz.

The Grand Shereef, who since his arrival three and a-half years ago has seen in succession seven titular or acting valis, all of them nonentities with the exception of General Fuad Pasha, has much increased his power since three years ago, when he was able to secure the election for Mecca of his son Abdullah, in spite of Turkish opposition, and it is now considered morally certain that his second son, Faisal, will be the new member for Jeddah. The very few places in the Hedjaz that are dignified with the titles of "chefs-lieux" of cazas or of mudirichs take no part in elections, so that most of the complicated provisions of the Election Law do not apply to the Hedjaz. The Jeddah election of three years ago seems to have been entirely irregular, the municipality having, I am informed, chosen 200 voters, who themselves, for reasons connected with their own local trades, unanimously chose the son of a wealthy Persian naturalised Ottoman shipping agent and merchant. This member and the two members for Mecca are understood to have done nothing in Parliament. The Jeddah municipality is now drawing up, according to law, a list of primary voters, but the election has virtually already commenced or perhaps even been finished. About a fortnight ago two telegrams, signed each by the Grand Shereef's agent in Jeddah and thirty traders and pilgrim guides of the town, were sent to Mecca, one to the Grand Shereef proposing his second son Faisal as member of Parliament, and the other to Faisal offering him membership, and favourable replies have been received. The popular impression seems to be that the election is now over, but there is a small party of Jeddah notables who insist on a regular election according to law, and put forward three candidates, none of whom is supposed to have any chance.

As to the Mecca elections I have little information. The election three years ago was as irregular as that in Jeddah. Information about the pending Mecca election will in due course be sent from this consulate. As to Medina, I have practically no information.

Parliament has been of little importance for the Hedjaz, but the Grand Shereef's growing power is important, and will be still further increased if he has a second son in Parliament.

I have, &c.
J. H. MONAHAN.

[14064] No. 4.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 2.)

(No. 9. Commercial. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, April 2, 1912.*

MESOPOTAMIAN irrigation adjudication is to take place on 20th April. Jackson and Pearson, who tendered last June, when, however, adjudication was annulled and another scheme substituted, object that Batignolles are now to be allowed to enter—objection based on argument that adjudication is not a new one, and that the firm may obtain from the Ministry plans, &c., the result of the labour of two English firms.

The two firms ask me to protest to the Turkish Government. I hesitate to do so, especially as I understand that another English firm (Paulings) are also intending to submit tenders. This firm is in a similar position to the French firm.

Request instructions.

[14179] No. 5.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 3.)

Sir, *India Office, April* 2, 1912.

WITH reference to your letter dated the 30th August, 1911, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward, for the consideration of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copies of telegrams to and from the Government of India regarding the extension of British control of the Trucial chiefs by an order in council.

The circumstances that have led the Government of India to regard this course as necessary are fully set forth in the Government of India's telegram dated the 20th March, and read in connection with the letters of the naval commander-in-chief of the 26th April, 1911, and the political resident, Persian Gulf, of the 30th idem (copies of which were sent to your department on the 6th June, 1911), they afford, in the Marquess of Crewe's opinion, cogent arguments in favour of it. Even if the present negotiations with Turkey result in the elimination of Turkish influence from the Arabian coast south of Ojair, it seems clear that the increasing attention paid by other Powers to the Persian Gulf—which will become still more marked if, as a result of the construction of the Bagdad Railway, the Gulf becomes an international highway—has made it necessary that our somewhat primitive methods of dealing with the Trucial chiefs should be regularised and placed upon a basis that will secure our claims against effective challenge. His Lordship is no more anxious than is Sir Edward Grey to extend our responsibilities, but recent experience at the head of the Gulf indicates that the time has come when we can abstain from consolidating, and in some measure extending, them, only at the imminent risk of seeing our corresponding rights pass into the hands of others.

The Government of India's proposals are therefore recommended to Sir E. Grey's favourable consideration. It is presumed that, if the Turkish Government is induced to relinquish its claim on El Katr, the Katr sheikh will be included in the new arrangement. The chain of British control will then be complete from Bahrein to Oman.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 5.

The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, January* 1, 1912.

PLEASE refer to your telegram dated the 22nd November, 1911.

Bahrein order in council and amendment of Persian coast order are being proceeded with; idea of a comprehensive order in council has been dropped. It is stated by Foreign Office that consideration can be given to question of Trucial chiefs order in council when settlement as to Arab littoral has been reached with Turkey; meanwhile your observations as to the policy of extending our responsibilities in this manner are desired by them. Please see letter dated the 30th August from Foreign Office, forwarded with letter dated the 1st September from Secretary, Political Department, India Office.

Enclosure 2 in No. 5.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *March* 20, 1912.

PLEASE refer to your telegram dated the 1st January, 1912, regarding Trucial Coast.

Resident, Persian Gulf, whom we have consulted, considers that the inevitable course of political development in the Gulf is forcing on us an extension of our responsibilities on the Trucial Coast, which, notwithstanding the inconveniences which it undoubtedly entails, we cannot help accepting. Owing to harshness of Belgian customs officer and introduction of new Persian tariff, the trade of Lingah began a few years ago to be diverted to Dubai. British India Company thereupon made Dubai a

port of call. The place is now concerned in the Gulf port systems of quarantine and mails. The inadequacy of local postal arrangements is constant theme of complaints by postal authorities and Indian community. There are no arrangements for quarantine there, and our position as responsible for quarantine administration in Gulf is on occasion rendered difficult by the absence of such arrangements, as for example on the occasion of the very severe plague epidemic at Shargah and Debai last spring. The Tehran Sanitary Council was informed, with a view to forestalling criticism, that Government of India were giving their attention to the sanitary supervision of the coast (see enclosure in letter of the 3rd December last from Mr. Bill, enclosed in letter of the 28th idem from Secretary to Government of India, Foreign Department). A good many European visitors who desire to sojourn in Debai for trade, and who look to us for protection, assistance, and general facilities, have been brought by the facility of communication which regular calls of mail steamers afford. Closer supervision, in order to check consignments of arms brought overland from Muscat and Sohar passing through Trucial Coast, is necessitated by the fact that the smuggling of arms has now come up into the Gulf. Further, though we claim to manage these Trucial chiefs *vis-à-vis* of the world in general and maintain against outsiders their status of independence, resident points out the crudity and defectiveness of our status for so doing and of our machinery for handling the chiefs—a circumstance which becomes evident at once when, as in the case of Abu Musa, we are brought into contact with a foreign Government.

We concur in resident's view, and consider that, though it is necessary to handle these petty sheikhs tactfully and carefully, it has become inevitable that control and supervision, and, concurrently, responsibilities, should be extended, and that such extension is best calculated to serve interests of sheikhs themselves no less than our own.

[11810] No. 6.

Foreign Office to Mr. C. Greenway.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 3, 1912.

ON the 12th December last you were good enough to communicate to me a letter addressed by the Anglo-Algerian Steam-ship Company to Messrs. Shaw and Co., referring to an offer made by the Vali of Bussorah to support an application by a British firm for a concession to dredge the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab beyond Fao, and enquiring whether Messrs. Shaw were disposed to take a share in the enterprise. You asked at the same time whether His Majesty's Government would have any objection to Messrs. Shaw obtaining such a concession.

I am now directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to state, for your confidential information, that among the proposals made by His Majesty's Government to the Turkish Government last July and now being discussed in the course of negotiations which are, as you are doubtless aware, in progress between the two Governments, was one for the appointment of a small rivorain commission, composed of a British and a Turkish representative, with an engineer, to be mutually agreed on, to superintend all matters pertaining to the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab, and the requisite periodical surveys.

I am to state that, in the view of His Majesty's Government, it would be of advantage, should the Turkish Government not accept the above proposal, that the work of dredging the bar should be done by British contractors. They are, however, reluctant to acquiesce, while negotiations with the Turkish Government are still pending, in a transaction which in fact amounts to an important modification of the *status quo*, since on the one hand the Turkish Government would be in a stronger position to claim undivided control of the river if the work was being done under their sole auspices, while on the other the hands of His Majesty's Government would be to some extent tied if British capital were involved.

It is understood from a subsequent statement made by you in the course of a visit to this Office on the 29th January last, that the intention of Messrs. Shaw was to reply to the letter of the Anglo-Algerian Steam-ship Company that the proposal would only be acceptable if an Anglo-Turkish Commission were entrusted with the management and collection of tolls, and if this answer has already been dispatched there is presumably no necessity for any further communication with the company on the

subject. If not, however, I am to suggest that in view of the considerations set forth above, it would be well to defer any reply to the company, if possible, till the negotiations now in progress have reached a conclusion.

I have, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[13406] No. 7.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 3, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo relative to the refusal of the Vali of Bussorah to allow the steam-tug "Bulbul" to run on the Tigris in place of the "Julnar" during the completion of repairs required by the latter vessel.

I am to inform you, in reply, that Sir E. Grey has sent a telegram to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, instructing his Excellency to remind the Turkish Government of the previous case of the same kind to which your letter refers, and to ask that immediate instructions may be sent to the vali to withdraw the prohibition which he has issued, and to abstain from obstruction on similar occasions in the future.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[14064] No. 8.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 177.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, April* 4, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 9, Commercial, of 2nd April: Mesopotamian irrigation.

I understand that previous adjudication was never formally annulled, and that new scheme only differs from original one in respect of certain additions.

If this is so, admission of Société des Batignolles and Pauling's is manifestly unfair, and you are authorised to protest strongly against their admission, especially if, as may be presumed, they will be shown Jackson and Pearson's tenders.

You should inform your French colleague of your action, reminding him of his language on this subject on previous occasions (see your despatches No. 551 and 565 of last year and No. 221 of 18th March), and expressing hope that he will give no support to French competition in this quarter.

[13119] No. 9.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

(No. 107.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 4, 1912.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 121 of the 27th ultimo, reporting a conversation with the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs relative to the Bagdad Railway.

With reference to M. Sazonof's remark that the only argument in favour of the exclusion of Persia from participation in the Bagdad–Gulf section of the line, which has been proposed by the Turkish Government is that in that case Germany might be excluded from participation in the Trans-Persian Railway, I have to point out the admission of Russia to a share in that section would not constitute a concession on the part of Germany, since that Power has renounced its rights over the section in return for ample compensation; neither could Germany, for the same reason, claim to receive a share in the Trans-Persian Railway on account of Russian participation in the Gulf section of the Bagdad line.

Your Excellency should take an opportunity of pointing this out to M. Sazonof.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[14441] No. 10.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 268. Confidential.)
Sir, *Constantinople, March* 29, 1912.

I AM informed by Sir Richard Crawford, to whom I communicated confidentially the substance of your despatch No. 99 of the 12th instant, that no further steps have been taken by the Turkish Customs Administration with regard to the immediate settlement of the question of constructing new customs buildings at Bagdad.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[14611] No. 11.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 82.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, April* 6, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 175 of 4th March.

His Majesty's consul at Bussorah reports that vali refused on 15th March to allow trial of steam-tug "Bulbul" with two barges between Gurna and Fao, on the ground that Mr. Lynch had permission to work a certain number of steamers on the Shatt-el-Arab, and that running of "Bulbul" in any way exceeded that permission. He, however, subsequently so far modified his attitude as to permit one trial of "Bulbul" with two barges from Bussorah to Fao and back only. This trial was carried out.

His Majesty's consul who is reporting fully by post, states that local authorities do not admit Mr. Lynch's right to navigate as far as Gurna.

[14718] No. 12.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 9.)

(No. 269.)
Sir, *Constantinople, March* 31, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul Erzeroum giving an account of the situation in the vilayet of Bitlis.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 12.

Consul McGregor to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 20.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, March* 19, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith an extract from a private letter addressed to me by the Rev. G. Knapp, in charge of the Bitlis vice-consulate, giving a further account of the situation in the province.

In view of Assim Bey's recent declarations to your Excellency that some of the more incapable valis in Kurdistan had been finally disposed of, I beg leave to mention that the new Vali of Bitlis, who, like almost all the higher officials there, is a Kurd, has a very bad reputation among those who knew him during his former residence in those parts. I am also informed that the new Vali of Diarbekir, Jellal Bey, is the slave of drunkenness and immorality, and is for weeks at a time unable to leave his house.

I have, &c.
P. J. C. McGREGOR.

Enclosure 2 in No. 12.

Rev. G. Knapp to Consul McGregor.

(Extract.) *Bitlis, March* 11, 1912.

THE acting vali and party returned from Sert a week ago. I made a short call on him at the Government office on Tuesday, and a more extended call at his residence on Saturday. This last was in the nature of a farewell call, since his successor will probably be here within a week. His mission to the Kurds in the Sert region does not seem to have been wholly successful. While showing a friendly attitude, the Kurdish chiefs seem to have been firm in their determination of finding out whether the Ittilaf were a good party before deciding what party they would adhere to.

On Tuesday I called on the Mektubji. He assured me that, even though the Government were more dormant than it is now, the Kurds would make no trouble and surely would not rise against their coreligionists—the Government. He said that Mussa Bey, after being acquitted of the charges against him, had come to the Government at Mush and had sworn fealty to the Government. He felt that there was nothing to fear from him this year. It is of interest to note that the Mektubji was Mussa Bey's guest the night before coming to this city, and that the very next day he called at the Russian consulate, *i.e.*, the day after he arrived here. He still has expectations of being elected to Parliament.

Of course you know that, though the Russian consul here was not overburdened with duties last fall, a "secretary" from St. Petersburgh came. It is a rather curious coincidence that the consulate seemed to get news of anything going on among the Kurds before the Government did. Bedros Effendi, the dragoman, made an effort to be elected for Parliament from the Mush region. Finding that there was no hope of success there he has been making efforts in these parts. It is said that he has offered 100 liras for the Akhlat vote. It is certain that he is trying to stir up disharmony among the Armenians. He prepared a list of sixty-five leading Armenians here and tried to organise a special meeting for the candidacy of some favourite of his own presumably, but really with the hope of putting himself forward. When it is known that the constitution does not allow one in foreign employ to be eligible even as secondary elector these efforts of his seem rather ridiculous and significant. These are evidently efforts of the consul to produce such divisions among the Armenians that one of their number (and certainly none of socialist stripe) shall be elected to Parliament.

One day last week some of the Moslems swore at an Armenian (Russian subject) while in his shop in the market. He swore back with interest, and a Moslem crowd gathered and trouble seemed imminent. Police and zaptiehs came on the scene, dispersed the crowd, and were about to take him to police quarters. He said he was a Russian subject and that they could not take him without instructions from his superior. Upon this the police told the Moslems to make no more trouble, and asked the Armenian to overlook the trouble—not to mention it to the consul. These are some straws which show which way the wind is blowing.

GEO. P. KNAPP.

[15019] No. 13.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 10.)

(No. 287. Confidential.)

Sir, *Constantinople, April* 4, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 125 of the 30th ultimo, forwarding a copy of a letter from the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company complaining that the Turkish authorities have withdrawn the permission granted to Messrs. Lynch last September to tow a second barge in order to transport 3,800 tons of accumulated cargo, in spite of the fact that up to the 16th March last only 1,568 tons of this accumulation had been transported.

The matter had already been brought to my notice by His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, whose report of the circumstances, however, puts a very different complexion upon it to that presented to you by Messrs. Lynch in London.

Mr. Crow reported on the 11th March that the 3,800 tons of accumulated cargo having then been conveyed, the Vali of Bussorah, under orders from the Sublime Porte,

requested that the towing of the barges should cease; Lynch's agent, however, claimed that the permission granted by the Porte to carry up to 3,800 tons referred to the second of the barges only, which had by the 14th March taken up 2,440 tons of cargo. He added that 1,838 tons still awaited shipment, and that 600 tons more were due to arrive shortly. The total cargoes carried since the date of the permission was 13,040 tons, of which the second of the barges had conveyed 1,450, and 408 tons of coal.

There does not appear to be any visible connection between the figures given by Lynch's agent at Bussorah on the 14th March and those quoted in the letter to your department of the 16th March, but the important point in the matter is that there is no justification whatever for Lynch's interpretation of the permission granted. If you will refer to my despatch No. 831 of the 17th November last, you will see that the Sublime Porte merely gave permission, as an exceptional favour, for Messrs. Lynch to tow the barges in order to transport the 3,000 tons of cargo accumulated at Bussorah, and there was nothing in the permission which could lead one to expect that the second barge alone might dispose of this accumulation; on the contrary, the evident intention was that as soon as the accumulation of 3,800 tons had been got rid of, the use of the second barge was to be discontinued.

I accordingly informed His Majesty's consul that the interpretation placed on the permission by Lynch's agent was unfounded, and added that I could not apply for any further privilege unless so instructed by your department, and I may say that I feel convinced that any application for further facilities addressed to the Sublime Porte now would create the very undesirable impression that this embassy was attempting by a bit of sharp practice to continue the use of the second barge beyond the period for which the embassy and the Sublime Porte originally supposed that the exceptional arrangement was being made.

As regards Messrs. Lynch's statement that the authorisation was withdrawn contrary to the wishes of the local authorities, His Majesty's consul-general at Bagdad reported to me on the 20th March last that the Vali of Bagdad had telegraphed to Constantinople strongly recommending the continuance of permission to Messrs. Lynch to tow the second barge, his reason being that the immediate stoppage of Lynch's second barge would involve a certain Turkish merchant at Bagdad in great loss, as he had bound himself to deliver a certain quantity of grain within a specified time to Bussorah, and Messrs. Lynch had accepted the downward contracts for this merchandise which required the space of two barges in order to fulfil them in the required time. The Vali had, however, requested the Minister of Finance, to whom he had addressed his telegram, to keep his request secret. No reply seems to have been sent to the Vali.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

[15569] No. 14.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 288.)

Sir, *Constantinople, April* 4, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 257 of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna, forwarding a report on the events immediately preceding the assassination of Prince Kopassi Bey.

His unpopularity with the Samians seems to have been largely due to the policy which, in accordance with the wishes of the committee, he is alleged to have pursued in the island.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 14.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 10.)

Sir, *Smyrna, April* 2, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the British vice-consul at Samos, describing the events which occurred immediately

before the assassination of Kopassi Bey, and which are believed to have provoked the commission of the crime.

I have, &c.
H. D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 14.

Vice-Consul Mare to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 3.)
Sir, *Samos, March* 28, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to report to you as follows:—

Shortly before the assassination of Kopassi Bey persons, who at the time of the disturbances three years ago had been condemned to death and had since been occupied in smuggling tobacco, rifles, and all sorts of ammunition from Greece to Asia Minor, landed at a place near Tighany about 800 tins of gunpowder. This was brought to the notice of Prince Kopassi, who at once ordered a certain Alex Spiron, officer of the Samian gendarmerie, to proceed to the spot and confiscate the tins. The officer acted accordingly, but, unfortunately, with very sad results, as these smugglers had been long looking for an opportunity for revenge, and succeeded, in the course of a few days, in capturing the officer, whom it is said they killed while on their way to Syra in a sailing-vessel. They killed another Samian officer at Tighany, and also forced the custom-house officer there to open and deliver to them all the money that was in the safe of the custom-house (about 300*l.*). The Prince at once ordered the arrest of the nearest relations of these criminals and the confiscation of two small vessels belonging to them. These measures are, in the general opinion, the true motive which led to the assassination of Prince Kopassi. The chiefs of Sofouli's party living at Athens and some of the other parties are also doubtlessly implicated in the crime.

I must further bring to your notice that, since the disturbance, Kopassi Bey had governed the island in a very despotic way. During the last few months he became so unpopular that he really could not find officials for the vacant posts. He had only four persons enjoying his full confidence, whom he used to elect every year as Senators, and a certain M. Thalassino, President of the High Court of Appeal and at the same time his secretary, who had also been President of the Assembly for the last four years.

The deputies of the last General Assembly were not elected, but rather appointed by him. They all belong to the lower class, and they blindly obeyed the orders of Kopassi Bey. In a word, all the acts of the Prince tended to the infringement of the organised charter. He had passed a law a few days ago in the Assembly replacing half of the local gendarmes by strangers—Albanians serving in the Turkish army. He also voted a certain sum for the erection of Turkish barracks, &c.

The court of justice is now investigating the facts of the assassination of the Prince.

I have, &c.
GREGORY D. L. MARC.

[15021] No. 15.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 10.)

(No. 291.)
Sir, *Constantinople, April* 6, 1912.

BEFORE taking action at the Sublime Porte, as instructed in your telegram No. 163 of the 1st instant, with regard to the running of Lynch's steamers on the Mesopotamian rivers, I thought it advisable to obtain a report from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah on the subject, having heard nothing of the matter from him. From the information now obtained from Mr. Crow, it appears that the complaint referred to in your above-mentioned telegram arose from a verbal application, made personally by Lynch's agent direct to the Vali of Bussorah last month, for the "Bulbul" to be run with the two barges temporarily to Bagdad, at a time when the "Khalifa" and the "Julnar" were both off the run, owing to the breakdown of the latter and the repair of the former. Mr. Crow himself at the same time requested the vali to allow the launch to proceed as far as Amara only for the purpose of conveying the mails, and the vali agreed, but no use was made of the permission as Lynch was able to

maintain the necessary connection with the steamers then running. In answer to a further enquiry of mine, Mr. Crow states that Lynch's company have now no ground whatever of complaint against the local authorities, and that three of their steamers are running regularly. I have, in view of this information, refrained from taking any action here.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[15349] No. 16.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.

(No. 75.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 10, 1912.

THE Italian Ambassador called at this Office on the 9th April. Sir A. Nicolson took the opportunity of a remark which he made as to observance of neutrality to express the hope that no measures, blockading or other, which his Government might be impelled to take in the Red Sea would in any way hamper the pilgrim traffic. The Ambassador assured Sir A. Nicolson that his Government kept very carefully in view the requirements of the pilgrim traffic, and were fully conscious of the necessity of not impeding it. He believed that the Marquis di San Giuliano proposed to make a tranquillising communication to your Excellency on the subject.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[15341] No. 17.

Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received April 12.)

Sir, *Treasury Chambers, April* 11, 1912.

IN reply to Mr. Mallet's letter of the 11th ultimo, I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to request you to inform Secretary Sir E. Grey that, after consulting the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, they are prepared to accept as a charge to Imperial funds one moiety of the cost of surveying certain portions of the Persian Gulf, which cost is estimated at a maximum of 4,667*l.* 8*s.* per annum for a period of eight years.

I am, &c.
T. L. HEATH.

[14611] No. 18.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 12, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a letter, dated the 28th March, from the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, protesting against the action of the Bussorah authorities to allow their steam-tug "Bulbul" to carry out trials on the Shatt-el-Arab.*

Copies of telegraphic correspondence with His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject are also enclosed.†

The question of ownership over the lower course of the Shatt-el-Arab is, as you are aware, under consideration in connection with the Turco-Persian frontier question; but the company appear to have desired that the trial should take place from a point as high as Kurna to the sea.

Sir E. Grey is disposed to think that the Ottoman authorities were strictly within their rights in prohibiting a trial as far up the river as Kurna; but he doubts whether it would be prudent to allow the action of the Vali, in limiting the trial to one trip from

* Part V, No. 132. † To Sir G. Lowther, No. 175, Telegraphic, April 4; and No. 11.

Bussorah to Fao, to pass without protest at Constantinople, since, quite apart from the question of ownership of the river, which need not be specifically raised in making a protest, it seems a dangerous precedent to admit this act of interference with freedom of navigation between Bussorah and the sea—an interference which appears to be in conflict with the established usage of centuries.

I am to request that Sir E. Grey may be furnished with the views of the Secretary of State for India on this question.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[15406] No. 19.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 13.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 10th April, 1912, regarding the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab.

India Office, April 12, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 19.

The Marquess of Crewe to the Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, April* 10, 1912.

SHATT-EL-ARAB navigation. See your telegram dated the 4th April, 1912.

Treaty of Erzeroum and explanatory notes form basis of Turkish claim to control the whole river, while guaranteeing free access to Mohammerah. Arguments based on practical inconvenience that will follow admission of these claims are accordingly irrelevant, unless we can get rid of interpretation on which claims are based. I request that you will telegraph your views as to interpretation, if you have any.

But we cannot of course overlook inconvenience. As you are aware, discussion is unfortunately in progress at Constantinople of whole question of Turco-Persian frontier, including Mohammerah; the matter may be referred to The Hague, in which case His Majesty's Government will do their best to keep Mohammerah out of the discussion, though it will be difficult, if not impossible, to do so.

A purely Ottoman river commission with British member, who must, however, be in service of Turkish Government, has in the meanwhile been proposed informally by the Turks. I think we may accept this, provided that effective voice for British member on commission and effective British control over his appointment, as well as definite exclusion of any other foreigner, are secured by convention. Your views are solicited by telegraph.

Reference is invited to proceedings of Committee of Imperial Defence, 24th May, 1911, pp. 17-22 (copy of which is in the possession of the Viceroy), as regards motive of His Majesty's Government in favouring mixed commission. The object of the Turks, no less than of ourselves, is to avoid other Powers being introduced, and the exclusion of others may in practice be very difficult, if Persia comes in as well as ourselves. In respect of services rendered in the port of Mohammerah the sheikh may, I recognise, have claim to dues; but cannot he be induced to delegate to British representative on commission any claims he may have in regard to jurisdiction in river? We could not in any case admit that sheikh's rights within meaning of our assurances are being encroached upon, if it is decided by His Majesty's Government that Turkish interpretation of treaty must be admitted, or if decision in Turkey's favour is given by Hague Tribunal.

Full expression of your views on the above questions is solicited. Informal discussions with Turks have come to an end, and discussions of more formal character will shortly begin between Turkish Ambassador and Sir Edward Grey. As points arise, you will be freely consulted.

[15393] No. 20.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 13.)

Sir, *India Office, April* 12, 1912.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 10th instant, inviting his observations upon a letter from the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, dated the 27th March, regarding the necessity for providing a light-ship outside the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab.

The Marquess of Crewe is of opinion that the objections entertained by their Lordships are based on an imperfect apprehension of the merits of this particular case, as well as of the general policy of His Majesty's Government.

That policy is not merely to provide what is "absolutely essential to safety," but to place the navigation of the entrance of the river upon so "thoroughly satisfactory a footing" that there shall be no inducement to, or opportunity for, any other Power to intervene, whether diplomatically or by putting down lights of its own. The object of His Majesty's Government is therefore not merely commercial or nautical, but mainly political. The supremacy enjoyed by this country in the Persian Gulf is based upon the services rendered by her to the commerce of all nations. If she is to continue to enjoy the supremacy she must continue to render the services; and it is precisely because—from a laudable desire to observe those principles of economy which the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury inculcate—His Majesty's Government have in the past hesitated to incur the expenditure necessary for that purpose that other Powers, as Sir E. Grey is aware, have begun to interest themselves in these matters, and the position of Great Britain has during the last year been considerably weakened. But, with the increasing probability that the Bagdad Railway will reach Bussorah within a measurable future, and that the Gulf will then become an international highway, the necessity for maintaining our supremacy there is increased, and to that end the provision of adequate aids to navigation—upon a scale which, without being extravagant, shall not admit of challenge—are a means. And Lord Crewe submits that while the interests of British taxpayers in the lighting of the Persian Gulf as a matter of navigation may be remote, they are deeply involved in it as a matter of the policy approved by His Majesty's Government.

As regards the merits of the particular proposal, I am to observe that what is required—and what has been described by naval experts as "absolutely necessary"—if the above-mentioned object is to be attained, is the location of a light-vessel with an 11-mile range 4 miles to seaward of the outer bar buoy; and it does not appear to have been adequately represented to the Lords Commissioners that the outer bar buoy itself, which even in clear weather has ordinarily a range of only 7 miles, cannot possibly take the place of an 11-mile light 4 miles further to sea. Nor is the necessity for the British ship in this position diminished by the fact that the Turkish Government have placed one of their own at the outer bar, since the latter ship is in a place where *ex hypothesi* it cannot fulfil the purpose required. But, apart from this, the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury are perhaps not aware that the functions of the proposed joint riverain commission will be confined to Turkish territorial waters, and that it is an essential part of the British proposals that Turkey should renounce all claim to regulate navigation on the high seas. Now, the outer bar is understood to be in the high seas; if, therefore, the negotiations are successful, the Turkish light-ship will have to be removed.

In conclusion, I am to say that on a further examination of the estimate of the cost of the depôt (22,000*l.*), given in paragraph 6 of my letter dated the 25th January, it has been found possible, by dispensing with a spare light-vessel, to reduce it by some 9,500*l.* In view of this large saving, but above all in view of the political and practical considerations urged above, Lord Crewe trusts that the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury will now withdraw their objections to the light-ship off the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

[15552] No. 21.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 13.)

(No. 144.)
(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, April 13, 1912.*

YOUR despatch No. 107 of 4th April: Bagdad Railway.

In the conversation reported in my telegram No. 121 of 27th March I gave Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs to understand that I was speaking entirely on my own account and not under instructions.

I would prefer, therefore, not to revert to it, and to postpone replying to his argument till I am instructed to make an official communication to him on the subject of our negotiations with Turkey. My doing so at present would not, I think, serve any useful purpose, and I should be somewhat embarrassed were he to put questions to me as to the admission or non-admission of Russia to a share in the Gulf section.

[15582] No. 22.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 303.)
Sir, *Constantinople, April 10, 1912.*

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your telegram No. 177 of the 4th instant, I spoke to Assim Bey on the 6th instant, protesting strongly against the Société des Batignolles and Paulings being allowed to compete in the forthcoming adjudication for the Mesopotamia works, the previous adjudication not having been formally annulled and the competitors not having withdrawn their deposits.

Assim Bey replied that he knew nothing whatever about the matter, but would address himself immediately to the Ministry of Public Works. For his part, he would prefer to see the work given to the English firm, for all the work done by the French in this country was extremely unsatisfactory.

I informed my French colleague of what I had done, but M. Bompard repeated what he had said before, namely, that he had no knowledge of this company or Creuzot being desirous of tendering, that they had not addressed themselves to him, and that it seemed to him very improbable that they would compete. This does not, however, agree with the information I have received, that is, as regards their intention of competing.

On the 8th I enquired of Assim Bey what had been the result of his enquiries. His Excellency replied that the Ministry of Public Works had stated that they had no knowledge of the matter and the Minister had kept it entirely in his own hands. Djavid Bey was unfortunately absent at Salonica and would not return until to-day. I urged Assim Bey to approach his colleague immediately on his return, as the matter was pressing, the date fixed for the adjudication being the 20th instant.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[15584] No. 23.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 305.)
Sir, *Constantinople, April 10, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Consul Crow in regard to the visits of the Vali of Bussorah to Fao. Ali Reza Pasha, mentioned in the last paragraph of Mr. Crow's despatch, is not a member of the Turco-Persian Frontier Commission.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 23.

Consul Crow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 11.)
Sir, *Bussorah, March 15, 1912.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 13 of the 9th instant, I am informed by Mr. Navarra, telegraph clerk in charge at Fao, that the vali, who visited the lightship in the Marmaris on the 4th instant with the Kaimakam of Fao, landed on the 5th instant at Fao on his return but did not survey or examine the fort. He inspected the Turkish telegraph building and also visited the British telegraph quarters. The vali told Mr. Navarra he wanted a wireless telegraph station at Fao in order to establish wireless communication with places on the Turkish-Arabian coast and Nejd. He asked questions about the wireless system and took some notes.

Mr. Navarra also reports that Ali Reza Pasha visited Fao on the 9th instant and examined the fort. The military garrison at Fao has, Mr. Navarra says, been reduced to twenty men and, as far as he can see, nothing is being done to the fort. It is, he says, rumoured at Fao that the Turks intend to send 400 men and six guns there.

The vali's visit on the 4th–5th March was no doubt in connection with Seyyid Talib's return to Bussorah in the Russian steamer, as he had, I am told, been instructed to report on the reception accorded him. A large number of Bussorah officials and notables proceeded to Mohammerah to welcome Seyyid Talib, who was greeted with great demonstrations of cordiality here.

Ali Reza Pasha left for Bagdad on the 14th instant. I have received no information so far to indicate that his visit was in connection with the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission, of which, I understand, he is a member.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

[16000] No. 24.

Aide-mémoire communicated to Foreign Office, April 15, 1912.

Partition des Capitaux.

EN vue de faciliter un accord, le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman est disposé à se rendre aux vues exprimées par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique et à confier la construction et l'exploitation du chemin de fer projeté entre Bagdad et Bassora à un syndicat international composé de capitaux ottomans, anglais, français et allemands, à raison de 25 pour cent à chaque groupe du montant du capital de la global. La présidence du conseil d'administration de la compagnie à être constituée sur ces bases, devra cependant être réservée à l'un des membres du conseil d'administration représentant le groupe ottoman, et en cas de partage égal de voix la décision à prendre devra être de préférence conforme à l'avis exprimé par le parti qui s'est rangé à l'opinion exprimée par le président du conseil d'administration.

Tarifs différentiels.

Les réserves faites par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique au sujet de tarifs différentiels sur la ligne de Bagdad, semble dériver de la nécessité d'empêcher l'application d'un tarif spécial au détriment des marchandises anglaises et au profit de celles d'un autre pays. Certes, on ne pourrait soulever d'objection à ce légitime souci; cependant, comme il est inadmissible, ainsi que cela se pratique d'ailleurs pour le transport des marchandises sur les réseaux ferrés de tous les pays, que toute marchandise, quelles qu'en soient la nature et la qualité, soit soumise à un tarif uniforme, nonobstant la distance à parcourir, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique voudra bien reconnaître que ce principe d'uniformité de tarif ne saurait être reconnu. Néanmoins, et en vue d'aller au-devant des légitimes soucis du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique, le Gouvernement Impérial est disposé à assurer au commerce anglais toutes les facilités compatibles avec les dispositions des conventions passées entre le Gouvernement Impérial et la Compagnie des Chemins de Fer de Bagdad, pour le transport des marchandises.

Le Gouvernement Impérial accepte en outre en principe, sauf à régler ultérieurement les questions de détail et de pratique, tous les autres points énumérés dans le mémorandum du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique et se rapportant—

1. Au traitement égal pour le transport, aux facilités et autres matières analogues.
2. A la prolongation de la ligne Bagdad–Bassora avec les conditions et modes de construction au point de vue technique et économique.

Quant à la conclusion d'arrangements financiers garantissant que les intérêts des diverses parties intéressées dans l'entreprise devront être d'une durée permanente et non sujets à limitation à l'expiration de la concession du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, étant donné que le réseau Bagdad–Bassora formera la portion finale de la ligne principale de Bagdad, on ne pourrait soumettre une partie d'un réseau ferré à des conditions d'une durée illimitée alors que la ligne principale elle-même est subordonnée à une concession limitée.

La convention à passer entre le Gouvernement Impérial et la nouvelle compagnie devra, à l'instar de la convention signée par la Compagnie du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, prévoir aussi le droit de rachat pour le Gouvernement ottoman de la ligne Bagdad–Bassora.

Indemnité financière à la Compagnie du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad.

Lors des négociations qui ont amené la renonciation de la compagnie allemande à son droit de concession sur la partie terminus du réseau, il avait été entendu qu'une indemnité devra lui être payée par la nouvelle compagnie concessionnaire comme prix de sa renonciation. Le montant de cette compensation pécuniaire devra, dans ces conditions, être fixé sur la base des avantages auxquels la susdite compagnie allemande a dû renoncer, et le payment incombera naturellement à la nouvelle compagnie à former.

Droits fluviaux.

Dans le mémorandum contenant les contre-propositions anglaises il est dit qu'il serait nécessaire que le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman prit l'engagement de ne pas imposer des droits fluviaux sur les navires ou marchandises anglaises sans le consentement du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique.

Les droits susmentionnés seront éventuellement prélevés en vue de faire face aux dépenses nécessaires pour le bon entretien du Chatt-el-Arab. La construction du chemin de fer en question rendra ce fleuve beaucoup plus important qu'il ne l'est à présent. Sa parfaite navigabilité sur tout son parcours devra être assurée d'une façon permanente. Des travaux seront entrepris dans le but de faciliter le transport, le débarquement et l'embarquement des marchandises qui prendront cette voie. Dès lors le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique voudra bien reconnaître que le Gouvernement ottoman, Puissance territoriale, ne pourra se passer de percevoir les susdits droits ni prendre d'ores et déjà un engagement quelconque de nature à l'empêcher plus ou moins dans l'avenir d'exercer ses droits souverains en cette matière.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique peut d'ailleurs être persuadé qu'aucun traitement différentiel ne sera appliqué aux marchandises et navires anglais.

Prolongation du Réseau Bagdad–Bassora.

Le Gouvernement Impérial a décidé de faire construire pour le moment la ligne Bagdad–Bassora jusqu'à cette dernière ville seulement; il n'y a donc pas lieu d'envisager dès à présent sa prolongation jusqu'au Golfe Persique. Le Gouvernement Impérial est cependant tout disposé à donner au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique toutes les assurances de nature à écarter les soucis et appréhensions qu'il pourrait nourrir au sujet de la portion Bassora au Golfe qui viendrait à être construite ultérieurement.

Questions politiques et territoriales.

La souveraineté territoriale effective de l'Empire ottoman a existé de tout temps sur la presqu'île d'El Katr, tandis que les objections soulevées par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique contre l'exercice de cette souveraineté sur certains points de cette presqu'île ne peuvent se concilier ni avec le principe de l'intégrité de l'Empire ottoman, ni se baser sur des arguments de fait et de droit (voir annexe p. 3). Le Gouvernement

Impérial ottoman espère donc que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique voudra bien ne pas insister sur ce point.

En ce qui concerne les îles Bahreïn, le Gouvernement Impérial, serait toutefois, disposé à renoncer à toute réclamation sur ces territoires à la condition que les consuls de Sa Majesté britannique ne réclament point dans l'avenir des privilèges capitulaires en faveur des indigènes de Bahreïn se trouvant dans les territoires de l'Empire ottoman; que les droits perçus par les cheikhs de Bahreïn sur les pêcheries perlières soient si possible réduits, ou sinon, que les droits actuels du moins ne soient pas augmentés, avec des assurances à cet effet; enfin que l'îlot de Zabnounié, situé près du port d'Ojéir et faisant incontestablement partie intégrante du sandjiak de Nedjd, soit en vue de prévenir tout malentendu, formellement reconnu par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique comme tel, c'est-à-dire comme faisant partie dudit sandjiak de Nedjd.

Koweït.

La Sublime Porte prie le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique de vouloir bien se rapporter aux développements et conclusions exposés dans la p. 4 de l'annexe au présent aide-mémoire.

Commission fluviale pour la Navigation du Chatt-el-Arab.

La Sublime Porte accède au désir exprimé par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique au sujet d'une commission à instituer pour les besoins de la navigation dans le Chatt-el Arab, à la condition toutefois que cette commission n'ait pas un caractère international. Dans l'intérêt même des deux Gouvernements il serait préférable de ne pas créer une institution internationale; aussi le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman suggère-t-il au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique la formation d'une commission purement ottomane dans laquelle siégera un technicien anglais engagé au service du Gouvernement ottoman. Une commission sous cette forme ne différera en rien dans la pratique de celle proposée par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique. Les attributions de cette commission seront ultérieurement définies dans tous leurs détails.

En ce qui concerne les inspections techniques, telles que l'éclairage, la pose de bouées, le pilotage et l'application des dispositions quarantenaires, le Gouvernement Impérial se chargera lui-même exclusivement de ces différents services, en tant qu'ils seront établis et dirigés sur son propre territoire et dans le eaux intérieures et territoriales de l'Empire. Les deux Gouvernements pourront toutefois s'entendre pour charger la commission précitée de s'occuper aussi desdites inspections, de la pose de bouées à Fao et du pilotage à travers ce détroit et le long du Chatt-el-Arab jusqu'à Bassora.

Quant à la police des eaux dans le Golfe Persique, le Gouvernement Impérial en sa qualité de principale Puissance riveraine du Golfe et étant aussi intéressée que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique au maintien de l'ordre et la sécurité dans ces parages, désire exercer la police des eaux conjointement avec la Grande-Bretagne. Les deux Gouvernements pourraient conclure une entente à cet effet, prenant pour exemple la convention qu'ils avaient conclu pour la répression de la traite.

Annexes.

El Katr.

Il est dit dans le mémorandum du 29 juillet que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique n'ayant jamais reconnu la souveraineté de l'Empire ottoman sur les territoires s'étendant au delà d'Ojéir, le Gouvernement Impérial devrait renoncer à toute réclamation touchant ces territoires. Le mémorandum cite à cet effet les assurances qui auraient été données en 1870 par le Ministre ottoman des Affaires Étrangères à l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté britannique à Constantinople, portant que "la Sublime Porte n'entretenait aucune intention d'établir sa suprématie sur Bahreïn, Muscat ou les tribus indépendantes sur les côtes du Golfe Persique."

Tout d'abord la Sublime Porte s'empresse de faire savoir au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique que toutes les recherches minutieusement effectuées dans les archives ont abouti à un résultat négatif. Elle pense donc qu'il existe un malentendu au sujet de ces assurances qui ne pouvaient raisonnablement être données, puisque le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman avait nullement l'intention de faire abandon, en faveur

de qui que ce soit, de ses droits souverains au sud d'Ojéir, y compris la presqu'île d'El Katr. Au contraire, le Gouvernement ottoman entendait conserver ses droits et les exercer exclusivement. La preuve en est que lorsqu'en 1871, un navire anglais vint à El Katr et que son commandant adressa, au nom du Cheikh de Bahreïn, quelques réclamations aux Cheikhs d'El Katr, ceux-ci s'appuyant sur leur nationalité ottomane repoussèrent énergiquement les prétentions du Cheikh de Bahreïn. Cet incident conduisit Midhat Pacha, alors Gouverneur général de Bagdad, à demander officiellement et par écrit au consul de Sa Majesté britannique en cette ville des explications au sujet de l'intervention des officiers de marine britannique dans les affaires d'El Katr. Le consul dans sa lettre responsive, nia cette intervention. Midhat Pacha envoya aussi, la même année, un bataillon sous le commandement du Lieutenant-Colonel Eumer Bey, embarqué sur la corvette "Skondéryé" et le vapeur "Assour," avec la mission de protéger les habitants d'El Katr contre les agressions probables des Bahreïnis. En 1875, la Sublime Porte adressa des représentations au Cabinet de Saint-James contre l'ingérence répétée des autorités maritimes anglaises dans les affaires d'El Katr. Ces autorités, appuyant les Cheikhs de Bahreïn, avaient en effet bombardé Zobara et tiré sur les "Beni-Hadjer" qui, placés sous le commandement de l'Emir Naissir, étaient envoyés à El Katr avec mission de percevoir les impôts dus au Fisc ottoman par la tribu Naïm d'El Katr.

Les Cheikhs d'El Katr n'ont reconnu jusqu'ici d'autre autorité que celle du Gouvernement ottoman. En effet, Djassim-bin-Saani repoussa les ouvertures du Cheikh Ahmed de Bahreïn qui voulait s'emparer de Zobara pour y établir une colonie de Bahreïnis. Djassim-bin-Saani lui fit dire qu'El Katr faisait partie de l'Empire ottoman et que lui, fonctionnaire ottoman soumis à l'autorité de la Sublime Porte, ne pouvait rien faire de sa propre initiative.

Les événements de 1875 furent probablement représentés par son Excellence Sir H. Elliot, Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté britannique à Constantinople, sous une forme bien différente de la réalité; sans émettre en cette occurrence aucune prétention au nom de son Gouvernement, il déclara au Ministre des Affaires Étrangères que le navire anglais, qui avait attaqué Zobara et tiré sur la tribu Beni Hadjer, se serait probablement livré à des exercices de tir dans le but d'intimider et de disperser les Arabes. De même, Lord Derby, dans sa réponse adressée le 24 novembre, 1874, à Musurus Pacha au sujet du bombardement de Zobara, ne souleva aucune question quant à la souveraineté de l'Empire ottoman sur la presqu'île d'El Katr. Dans sa note verbale du 11 juillet, 1891, la Sublime Porte fit savoir en réponse à l'Ambassade britannique, que Zobara et Odeïd se trouvent dans les limites du vilayet de Bassora, et qu'ils sont depuis longtemps administrés par des caïmacans et des mudirs.

Cette note ne provoqua aucune protestation de la part de l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté britannique, et la note verbale du Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères en date du 26 janvier, 1892 (également demeurée sans réponse), faisant allusion au traité signé par le Cheikh d'Abuthabi, contenait textuellement ce qui suit :—

"Comme le résident anglais ne pouvait ignorer que la souveraineté de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan s'étend sur les contrées en question (El-Katr, Zobara et Odeïd), il aurait dû s'abstenir d'exercer le rôle de médiateur entre les cheikhs arabes, sans l'assentiment préalable de la Sublime Porte. Quoiqu'il en soit, le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman ayant été laissé dans l'ignorance complète de cet acte, ce dernier ne peut avoir aucune influence sur ses droits de souveraineté. Du reste, l'arrangement en question ne contenait qu'un armistice entre quelques cheikhs dont le maintien est confié à la surveillance des autorités anglaises, et ne saurait être invoqué en aucun cas en faveur de l'établissement de postes militaires à Zobara et Odeïd."

En 1895 l'Ambassade Impériale ottomane à Londres s'adressa au Foreign Office pour se plaindre de l'attitude observée par le commandant des navires anglais, qui avait pressé et menacé les quelques centaines de Bahreïnis soumis au Cheikh Djassim, et établis en émigrés à Zobara, où ils avaient arboré le drapeau ottoman.

Saïd Pacha, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, écrivit à la date du 22 avril, 1893, à son Excellence Sir Clare Ford, la lettre suivante :—

"En me référant à la conversation que j'ai eu l'honneur d'avoir aujourd'hui avec votre Excellence, je m'empresse de lui transmettre, ci-près, copie d'un télégramme signé par Djassim, caïmakan d'El Katr, et les habitants. Ainsi que votre Excellence le relèvera de la lecture de ces pièces, les signataires, en leur qualité de fidèles sujets de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, s'adressent à leur auguste Souverain pour demander sa haute sollicitude en leur faveur. Il est hors de doute qu'il sera procédé en cette circonstance d'après la justice et l'équité.

"P.S.—Je n'ai pas besoin de répéter que la présence à Katr d'un résident anglais avec un bâtiment d'État de Sa Majesté britannique, n'a pas sa raison d'être. Votre Excellence en conviendra, j'en suis persuadé, lorsqu'elle aura pris connaissance du télégramme précité."

Le commandant du navire anglais "Sphynx," arrivé le 30 juin, 1890, dans le port d'El Katr, malgré le conseil amical qui lui avait été donné par le commandant du stationnaire ottoman "Smyrd-i-Déria," débarqua et rendit visite au Cheikh Ahmed, qu'il interrogea sur l'autorité ottomane exercée à El Katr. Cette conversation fut rapportée par le cheikh à la Sublime Porte, qui, par le canal de l'Ambassade ottomane à Londres, se plaignit encore une fois auprès du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique de l'attitude des officiers de marine anglais.

L'année dernière Djassim Saani se refusa à donner à l'agent britannique à Bahreïn l'autorisation demandée par ce dernier d'établir des Bahreïnis à Zobara, et ce contre payement d'une somme annuelle de 10,000 roupies. Djassim, en sa qualité de fonctionnaire ottoman, ne pouvait agir autrement. Les démarches analogues faites par Zaïd, fils du Cheikh d'Abuthabi, échouèrent également.

Si le Gouvernement Impérial s'est abstenu à différentes époques d'envoyer à leur poste les Mudirs de Zobara, d'El-Wakra et Odeïd, cela n'a été que provisoirement et en vue de prévenir une friction entre les deux Gouvernements unis. Mais la Sublime Porte a toujours réservé ses droits sur ces localités en attendant le règlement définitif et satisfaisant de la situation vraiment anormale d'El Katr, en ce qui concerne certains points du littoral.

A côté des fonctionnaires civils que la Sublime Porte a désignés depuis longtemps à El Katr (les noms et qualités de ces fonctionnaires sont mentionnés dans les annuaires officiels, budgets et registres du Gouvernement Impérial), il y existe aussi un fort détachement militaire, ce qui constitue aussi la plus importante affirmation de la souveraineté effective de la Turquie dans ces parages.

Koweït.

Dans son mémorandum du 29 juillet dernier, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique appuie ses réclamations sur les deux principaux faits suivants :—

1. La non-reconnaissance par la Grande-Bretagne de la protection ottomane sur Koweït.
2. L'accord de 1901.

Le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman ne s'est engagé en 1901, vis-à-vis de celui de Sa Majesté britannique qu'à ne pas envoyer de troupes à Koweït. Il a reçu du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique l'assurance par écrit qu'il respecterait également le *statu quo*. Or la Sublime Porte, lors de la conclusion de cette entente, ignorait la convention, qui lui a été communiquée plus tard, que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique avait fait signer en 1889 au Cheikh Mubarek. Aux yeux de la Sublime Porte, le *statu quo* n'était donc pas la nouvelle situation créée par ladite convention, et le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman de son côté n'a jamais reconnu et admis cette situation politique créée en faveur du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique par la convention susmentionnée.

Les Sabbah ont été de tous temps des sujets ottomans et simplement caïmacans de Koweït. Abdullah-bin-Sabbah, son frère Mubarek ainsi que les habitants de Koweït ont servi en 1870 dans les rangs de l'armée ottomane comme sujets de l'Empire. C'est le drapeau ottoman qui flotte à Koweït—fait que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique a reconnu. Le cheikh actuel Mubarek, dans toutes ses correspondances avec les autorités supérieures de Bassora dont il relève, se qualifie à chaque occasion de sujet fidèle de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et les signe : "Caïmacan de Koweït." Tout dernièrement encore il s'est adressé au vilayet de Bassora pour obtenir des actes de nationalité ottomane destinés à ses fils. Les habitants, notables ou non, se sont maintes fois adressés aux autorités supérieures ottomanes en qualité de sujets de l'Empire.

Quant aux limites de Koweït, telles qu'elles sont représentées et réclamées par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique, et formant un territoire d'une étendue de 160 miles de largeur sur 190 miles de longueur, ces limites sont d'autant moins admissibles que la sphère d'influence du cheikh ne s'étend pas au nord, nord-ouest et au sud au delà de Kuzimeh, Jahra et Sina. Surtout au sud l'influence du cheikh ne

se fait pas sentir au delà d'une distance de 20 kilom., c'est-à-dire aux confins du territoire de parcours de la grande tribu Ajman.

Dès lors, Koweït ne pourrait être considéré autrement que comme une ville ottomane, dont l'administration est confiée au Cheikh Mubarek nommé par ordre Impérial caïmacan de cette localité.

Toutefois, la Sublime Porte, animée d'un sincère désir d'entente sur ce point avec le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique, consent à conclure un arrangement définitif avec la Grande-Bretagne, sur les bases suivantes :

Maintien de la souveraineté effective du Gouvernement ottoman sur Bubian, Wadia, et autres îles voisines ;

Remplacement des conventions (sans valeur juridique internationale) signées par le Cheikh Mubarek, par une convention à conclure entre les deux Gouvernements britannique et ottoman, protégeant les intérêts économiques de la Grande-Bretagne à Koweït, mais compatible dans ses termes et effets avec les droits souverains de l'Empire sur Koweït ;

Soumission à la législation ottomane des propriétés appartenant au Cheikh et sises dans le vilayet de Bassora avec la jouissance tranquille et complète de celles-ci d'après les dispositions des lois ottomanes régissant la matière.

[14179] No. 25.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 15, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, regarding the proposal to extend and strengthen the control of His Majesty's Government over the Trucial chiefs in the Persian Gulf.

Sir E. Grey is far from underrating the importance of the considerations in favour of such a course which are advanced by His Majesty's consul-general at Bushire, and have received the support of the Government of India and of the Marquis of Crewe himself, but as no steps in the direction indicated can be taken till the negotiations now in progress with the Turkish Government respecting the Persian Gulf have been completed, it is possible to use the interval for the further discussion of certain points connected with the subject. I am to suggest that it would be convenient if the views of the Government of India as to the steps which should be taken to give effect to the policy which they advocate, apart from the promulgation of an order in council applicable to the Trucial Coast, could be ascertained in a more precise form.

In his letter of the 26th April, 1911 (copy of which formed the first enclosure in your letter of the 6th June of that year), the commander-in-chief, East Indies, advocated the proclamation of a protectorate over the whole region and the establishment of a wireless telegraph station at Debai.

In this letter Rear-Admiral Sir E. Slade represented, moreover, the importance of obtaining control of the pearl fisheries in those regions so as to remove the danger (which is considered imminent) of their exploitation by the subjects of other European Powers. I am to point out that the extent to which this could be done by means of the action recommended is very doubtful, as shown on pp. 40–45 of Mr. Parker's "Memorandum respecting British interests in the Persian Gulf," dated the 12th February, 1908, in view of the fact that the banks lie to a great extent outside territorial waters.

There is a further consideration which must not be lost sight of, viz., that the divers, according to Sir E. Slade, are mostly slaves. The assumption of Great Britain of the control of the fisheries and the responsibilities connected therewith must be immediately followed, as it appears to Sir E. Grey, by the manumission of these people which would presumably give rise to disputes with the chiefs concerned.

On the question of the inclusion of El Katr in the proposed order, after the conclusion of treaties with its sheikhs, which Sir E. Slade also discusses, no observations can usefully be offered during the progress of the present negotiations, of which the settlement of its status forms a part.

Sir P. Cox, copy of whose letter of the 30th April, 1911, to the Government of India was also enclosed in your communication referred to, concurs generally in Sir E. Slade's views, except that he advocates the establishment of the proposed wireless telegraph station at Zora instead of at Debai ; but he admits that the Trucial

chiefs are opposed to any extension of British control (which, indeed, is sufficiently obvious from such incidents as the attack on the landing party from His Majesty's ship "Hyacinth") and that the establishment of a resident at Debai "even as a periodical sojourner" would probably meet with opposition. In these circumstances the proposed British control would presumably have to be exercised by the officer in charge of the telegraph station at Zora and the extent to which he would be able to enforce his authority in such conditions appears to Sir E. Grey problematical.

This point was raised in the letter from this Office of the 30th August last, wherein it was suggested that the attention of the Government of India should be drawn to it, but Sir E. Grey observes that their telegram, copy of which is enclosed in your letter under reply, contains no specific proposal for dealing with the difficulty, and contains no remarks on the projected telegraph station, but is more concerned with pointing out the importance, from a general point of view, of establishing British authority at Debai, which is deprecated by Sir P. Cox.

I am accordingly to suggest that the attention of the Government of India should be directed to all the points raised in this letter, that they should be asked to give their views upon them in detail and as to the steps which should eventually be taken to give effect to their recommendations.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[16011] No. 26.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 16.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated 4th April, 1912 (decypher and paraphrase), regarding the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab.

India Office, April 16, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 26.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *April* 4, 1912.

REFERENCE is invited to my telegram dated the 12th ultimo regarding question of exercising control over Shatt-el-Arab bar navigation.

From recent correspondence, it would appear that creation of an Anglo-Turkish Commission in regard to question of levy of shipping dues as well as that of dredging of bar and buoy agency is now in contemplation and under discussion. In opinion of resident, Persian Gulf, this project is calculated to bring the much-vexed question of Turco-Persian boundary and respective rights of two riparian Powers into acute issue, besides introducing complicating, if unavoidable, element into question of control of bar navigation. Although, as regards mere buoying of bar, Persia has not earned title to be consulted in regard to project for levy of shipping dues on vessels entering river, she is, in resident's opinion, on different ground, as vessels plying to Persian ports of Abadan or Mohammerah will probably constitute considerable, if not major, portion of shipping affected, if dues are levied at all ; and resident considers that we cannot ignore claim to participation which Persia will hardly fail to advance. The matter, resident adds, is also one that affects closely Sheikh of Mohammerah's position, as representatives of British Government both at Tehran and in the Gulf have always insisted on responsibility of Sheikh as well as of Persian Government for safety of our commerce in the river ; and in our endeavour to achieve this object we have always had to rely mainly on co-operation of Persian Government's local representatives, as was brought out in correspondence resulting from Zain incident of April 1910. Apart from any protest that might be made by him as representing Persian Government's interests, Sheikh of Mohammerah would certainly feel, if Turkish authority were now recognised by us over the whole river, that we were acting contrary to the assurances we have given him undertaking to safeguard him against any encroachment on his jurisdiction and recognised rights by foreign Power ; while, in view of fact

that Sheikh claims the allegiance of by far the greater proportion of Arabs on both sides of river, the abandonment of all supervision by him over river could scarcely fail to have very bad effect. Suggestion is made by resident whether modified proposals could not be made to the Turkish Government under which, on any board created to superintend measures for regulation and improvement of river, representation in some form, direct or through Sheikh of Mohammerah, could be allowed to Persia.

We sent resident's letter by mail of the 21st ultimo. We submit his suggestion for consideration of His Majesty's Government; his considerations are of importance and have my support.

[15849] No. 27.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 16.)

(No. 90.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, April 15, 1912.*

MY despatch No. 303: Mesopotamia irrigation.

Minister of Public Works having returned, Minister for Foreign Affairs told me to-day that, although work had already been put up to adjudication some time ago, when two English firms [? tendered], that adjudication had never been definitely proceeded with. He maintained that present adjudication is a new one on an amplified basis, and Minister of Public Works cannot assume responsibility before Parliament of excluding other competitors. Minister for Foreign Affairs added that Paulings and Batignolles were now tendering, but he was convinced that one of the original firms would secure contract, as their experience would give them a great advantage. In order to prove that these firms can have no grievance, Minister for Foreign Affairs laid stress on the fact that specifications on which tenders are asked for are based on Willcocks's plans, which were made for Turkish Government and are their exclusive property. These plans are on sale to any person who chooses to buy them.

[15019] No. 28.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 16, 1912.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to refer to the letter from this Office of the 30th ultimo, relative to the complaint of your company that the Turkish authorities have withdrawn the permission granted to Messrs. Lynch last September to tow a second barge in order to transport 3,800 tons of accumulated cargo, in spite of the fact that up to the 16th March last only 1,368 tons of this accumulation had been transported, and to inform you that he has now received a report from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject.

Sir G. Lowther states that the matter had already been brought to his notice by His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, whose report of the circumstances, puts a different complexion upon it to that presented in your letter of the 16th ultimo.

Mr. Crow reported on the 11th March that 3,800 tons of accumulated cargo having then been conveyed, the Vali of Bussorah, under orders from the Sublime Porte, requested that the towing of the barges should cease: your agent, however, claimed that the permission granted by the Porte to carry up to 3,800 tons referred to the second of the barges only, which had, by the 14th March, taken up 2,440 tons of cargo. He added that 1,838 tons still awaited shipment, and that 600 tons more were due to arrive shortly. The total cargoes carried since the date of the permission was 15,040 tons, of which the second of the barges had conveyed 1,450, and 408 tons of coal.

Sir G. Lowther observes that there does not appear to be any visible connection between the figures given by your agent at Bussorah on the 14th March and those quoted in your letter of the 11th March, but that the important point in the matter is that your interpretation of the permission granted is incorrect, since the Sublime Porte merely gave permission, as an exceptional favour, for Messrs. Lynch to tow the barges in order to transport the 3,000 tons of cargo accumulated at Bussorah, and there was nothing in the permission which could lead to the expectation that the

second barge alone might dispose of this accumulation, the evident intention being, on the contrary, that as soon as the accumulation of 3,800 tons had been got rid of, the use of the second barge was to be discontinued.

His Excellency accordingly informed His Majesty's consul that the interpretation placed on the permission by your agent was untenable, and added that he could not apply for any further privilege unless so instructed by Sir E. Grey.

Sir G. Lowther adds that he feels convinced that any application for further facilities addressed to the Sublime Porte now, would create the very undesirable impression that His Majesty's Embassy was attempting by a bit of sharp practice to continue the use of the second barge beyond the period for which they and the Sublime Porte orginally supposed that the exceptional arrangement was being made.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey entirely shares Sir G. Lowther's view on this question.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[15021] No. 29.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 16, 1912.*

WITH reference to the letter from this Office of the 3rd instant relative to difficulties which have arisen between your company's agent and the Vali of Bussorah with regard to the running of your steamers on the Mesopotamian rivers, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to inform you that he has received a report from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject.

Sir G. Lowther states that he thought it advisable to obtain a report from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah on the subject, having heard nothing of the matter from him. From the information obtained from Mr. Crow, it appears that the complaint referred to in your letter of the 28th ultimo arose from a verbal application made personally by your agent direct to the Vali of Bussorah last month for the "Bulbul" to be run with the two barges temporarily to Bagdad, at a time when the "Khalifa" and the "Julnar" were both off the run owing to the breakdown of the latter and the repair of the former. Mr. Crow himself at the same time requested the Vali to allow the launch to proceed as far as Amara only, for the purpose of conveying the mails, and the Vali agreed, but no use was made of the permission, as your company were able to maintain the necessary connection with the steamers then running. In answer to a further enquiry from Sir G. Lowther, Mr. Crow stated that your company have now no ground of complaint against the local authorities, and that three of their steamers are running regularly.

Sir G. Lowther adds that, in view of this information, he has refrained from taking any action at the Sublime Porte.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey approves the course followed by his Excellency in this matter.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[16197] No. 30.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 18.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 13th April, 1912, regarding the Shatt-el-Arab.

India Office, April 17, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 30.

The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, April* 13, 1912.

SHATT-EL-ARAB.

Please refer to my telegram dated the 10th April, 1912. In view of the fact that question has been raised at Constantinople between Persia and Turkey regarding frontier near Mohammerah, His Majesty's Government are making confidential communication to following effect to the Russian Government, conveying their views on the subject. You should treat these views as most confidential:—

"Turkish claims of 1850, if now revived, could not be recognised by His Majesty's Government. But, as a result of the Turks failing to accept the line which was recommended in 1850 by the mediating commissioners, a frontier more advantageous to Persia than that line has been observed locally for 60 years; and, though it may be doubtful, owing to the reservations contained in the Turco-Persian Protocol of 1869, whether the argument of *uti possidetis* would prevail on a strictly legal interpretation, yet His Majesty's Government could not admit that it should be entirely ignored in arriving at a final settlement.

"His Majesty's Government are inclined to think, in view of wording of second article of Treaty of Erzeroum, that freedom of navigation is all that can be claimed for Persia on the Shatt-el-Arab, as Turkey, while conceding such freedom, has been at great pains to assert her right of ownership over the entire waters of the river.

"In these circumstances, I do not think that a frontier could be claimed with success against Turkey more advantageous to Persia than the line of the mediating commissioners, from the sea to the point where that line strikes off from the Shatt-el-Arab.

"But the frontier, as observed locally, strikes off from the Shatt-el-Arab at a point 6½ miles to the west of the line recommended by the commissioners, and the Sheikh of Mohammerah's offices and palace are contained in the intervening territory. In 1850 a protest was made by Persia against the cession to Turkey of these six miles or so, and the allocation to Turkey of the territory in question had been suggested by the commissioners, with the object of securing safety of navigation to Bussorah, which they thought might be endangered if that particular territory was held by Persia, and not *expressis verbis* in pursuance of the treaty. As the commissioners' apprehensions have been shown by the experience of 60 years to be without foundation no reason for disturbing Sheikh of Mohammerah seems to exist, and any attempt to do so would be opposed by His Majesty's Government.

"Line recommended by mediating commissioners proceeds in direction of Hawizeh after leaving Shatt-el-Arab, while that observed locally runs west of Hawizeh by some miles. In view of inconvenience which would be caused locally, disturbance of frontier, even as locally observed near Hawizeh, would be strongly deprecated by His Majesty's Government."

A map showing the frontier as recognised locally, referred to in paragraph 8 of letter dated the 12th March, 1910, from Wilson to Resident, Persian Gulf, should be sent as soon as possible. Frontier is spoken of by Wilson, in his letter of the 12th March, 1910, as being some 10 miles to the west of Hawizeh; but distance is given by him as 6 or 8 farsakhs in letter of the 26th May, 1909, paragraph 11. Please say which statement is accurate.

[12347] No. 31.

Mr. Parker to Djevid Bey.

(Private.)

My dear Djevid Bey, *Foreign Office, April* 18, 1912.

YOU asked me to let you know privately, as soon as possible after we had received your reply, whether I thought the proposals of your Government were likely to prove acceptable.

As you only communicated the reply on the 15th April, there has not been time to submit it to Sir E. Grey; but I may tell you now, though purely as my own personal

view, that I am greatly disappointed and, after what passed at our informal discussions, not a little surprised at the terms of your official reply.

When contrasted with the terms of the British memorandum of last July, the Ottoman reply seems to show, on almost all the principal points, marked divergency, and I cannot conceal from you that I apprehend grave and insuperable objection to some of your proposals.

I think that a very bad impression will be produced by the attempt which is made to whittle away the formal assurances which were given by the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs to our Ambassador in 1870; those assurances, though verbal, were *repeatedly* given, and were referred to in subsequent correspondence. I can show you the original signed despatches from our Ambassador at Constantinople.

Then as to Koweit: I had been led to expect that, while the Ottoman Government might feel some reluctance to withdraw the military post from Bubiyan Island, the remaining proposals included in our memorandum of last July respecting Koweit furnished the basis of an agreement between the two countries. I must confess that a great stretch of the imagination appears necessary to reconcile the basis of agreement proposed in your reply with the determination of His Majesty's Government not to consent "to any interference with the succession or with the internal administration, or any infringement of the complete autonomy of the Sheikh."

It may be that there are omissions from your reply. I am almost led to think so from your language about Koweit to me.

You know how desirous I am that the negotiations should succeed; yet I fail to discover the elements of conciliation, whether in regard to accepting our last proposals as to participation in the railway, or in regard to several other points.

I am, &c.

ALWYN PARKER.

[16485] No. 32.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 19.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 18th April, 1912, regarding the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab.

India Office, April 19, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 32.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *April* 18, 1912.

SHATT-EL-ARAB navigation. Please see your telegram dated the 6th April. Telegram to following effect received from Resident, Persian Gulf. A chart showing territorial waters will follow:—

"Following represent views of myself and naval commander-in-chief in consultation; our observations refer to original hand-drawn large scale chart of March 1911, understood to be with Hydrographic Department, Admiralty, which forms the basis of service chart 1235.

"Ordinary low-water mark on mainland is, in our opinion, point from which 3-mile limit should be measured; and we consider that the edge of the belt of reeds off Ras-al-Bisha point must be taken as constituting ordinary low-water mark on Turkish side. Spit of mud beyond that point cannot fairly be claimed as mainland, as it only dries in patches at extraordinary low-water of springs.

"The part indicated by underlined figures must be taken as mainland on the Persian side, as it uncovers at ordinary low-water; but commander of 'Palinurus,' after the experience of a year, considers that the insulated patch just south of Khor-al-Nasar only dries at extraordinary springs, and we would therefore strongly urge that this patch be not considered as mainland.

"We are of opinion that, measured on the above premises, the limits of Persian and Turkish waters, respectively, are as follows: (1) Persian. Limit cuts centre of

navigable channel at a point south of 45° 30′ east of true 5·71 miles from triangular beacon erected last year on Persian side; (2) Turkish. Limits cut centre of navigable channel at a point south of 47° 30′ east of true 3·215 miles from triangular beacon aforesaid.

"Even if Turkish claim to waters of whole river were made good, we consider that it would not be legitimate for Turks to extend their limits to seaward by measuring from Persian bank, and that they could only measure from Turkish bank."

Views of resident and naval commander-in-chief have our concurrence.

[16312] No. 33.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 99.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, April 18, 1912.*

FOLLOWING from consular officer at Smyrna, No. 11:—

"British vice-consul at Scala Nuova telegraphs that two Italian war-ships have bombarded Samos, and that island has been occupied."

[16515] No. 34.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 102.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Constantinople, April 19, 1912.*

MY telegram No. 99 of 18th April.

Following from consul, Samos:—

"Two Italian men-of-war bombarded this morning Turkish barracks. Troops retired in the interior. Turkish stationnaire destroyed. Both ships anchored at Vathy."

[15393] No. 35.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 19, 1912.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that he caused to be communicated to the India Office the purport of your letter of the 27th ultimo, relative to the lighting and buoyage of the Persian Gulf, with special reference to the proposed establishment of a lightship outside the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab, with a request that he might be furnished with the observations of the Marquess of Crewe on the points raised thereon.

I am now to transmit to you herewith copy of the reply of that department, setting forth at greater length the considerations which render the existence of such a vessel desirable, and to state that Sir E. Grey entirely shares Lord Crewe's views on the subject.*

I am accordingly to express the hope that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury may see their way to reconsider their decision on this point, more especially in view of the fact that it has been found possible to reduce the estimate of the cost of the proposed depôt by some £9,500.

I am to add that the tenour of your letter under reply was also made known to the Admiralty, with a request for the observations of the Lords Commissioners, and that the reply of that department will be communicated to you as soon as it is received.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

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* No. 20.

[16686] No. 36.

Mr. Greenway to Mr. Mallet.—(Received April 20.)

Winchester House, Old Broad Street,
Dear Mr. Mallet, *London, April 19, 1912.*

I BEG to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant explaining the present position of the negotiations with the Turkish Government for the dredging of the bar at the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab, and that though, in the view of His Majesty's Government it would be of advantage that the work of dredging should be undertaken by a British contractor, it is not considered advisable that any application for a concession, as suggested by the Vali of Bussorah, should be made while these negotiations are pending.

In reply, I have to state that, following my visit to your Office early in January last, a telegram was sent as then arranged, to Mr. Darby, Messrs. Strick, Scott, and Co's representative at Bussorah, in the terms of the enclosed copy, which I believed conveyed the views of His Majesty's Government as then expressed. This telegram was confirmed in a letter giving fuller details, of which also I enclose a copy.

We have not yet been advised by Mr. Darby as to the result of his negotiations, and presumably the matter is under consideration by the Turkish authorities, but inasmuch as the views expressed in your letter under reply differ somewhat from those conveyed to Mr. Darby in January, I shall be obliged if you will let me know whether, in the circumstances, you consider it advisable to send him a further telegram instructing him to withdraw any application he may have put forward, and to take no further action in the matter pending the result of certain negotiations which His Majesty's Government are now conducting with the Turkish Government.

I may mention that the application if made, would not be made on behalf of my firm of Messrs. R. G. Shaw and Co., but on behalf of the firm of Messrs. Strick, Scott, and Co. (Limited), in which I am also a partner, and who are agents for the Anglo-Algerian Steam ship Company.

I am, &c.
C. GREENWAY.

Enclosure in No. 36.

Telegram sent to Shamal, Bushire, January 5, 1912.

THE following is for . Please translate and forward.—C. DARBY.

"Referring to your letter of 18th November. Apply for dredging concessson on behalf of Anglo-Turkish Board, to be constituted of yourself, W. S. Lamb, British consul, and two Turkish representatives, with power to raise necessary capital, and levy tolls when board formed and approved by British, Turkish Governments. Strick, Scott, and Co. will contract with them for dredging."

Enclosure 2 in No. 36.

Messrs. Strick, Scott, and Co. (London) to Messrs. Strick, Scott, and Co. (Bussorah).

Winchester House, Old Broad Street,
Dear Sirs, *London, January 5, 1912.*

DREDGING the Fao bar.

Mr. Greenway has interviewed the Foreign Office with reference to this scheme. As a result it appears to us that we should approach this question on similar lines to those being followed by the British Government in respect of the buoying and lighting of the river. We are therefore writing you to-day (through Mohammerah) to take preliminary steps by applying for a dredging concession on behalf of an Anglo-Turkish board, to be constituted of two British representatives, say Messrs. Darby and Lamb, two Turkish representatives, and a British consul. This board should have the power to raise the necessary capital, and to levy tolls on all shipping. When, and if such a board is formed, and its constitution is approved by the British and Turkish Governments, this firm would be prepared to contract with them for the dredging of the bar.

The scheme will require careful consideration before we actually embark on it, as we are quite prepared to find that it is one of greater magnitude than one would imagine from the light-hearted way in which it has been placed before us.

Our ideas have not yet taken definite shape, but two schemes occur to us as possibilities. One is that the board to be formed, say the Bussorah Harbour Board should, under the powers vested in it, sanction the formation of a separate compa n and for to ask Strick, Scott, and Co. direct to raise the capital required. In either case Strick, Scott, and Co. would only interest themselves if they secured a permanent agency, and if the interest on the capital invested could be shewn to be fully secured by the tolls (in part or in whole) to be levied.

Although a certain amount of information was given to Mr. Greenway last year in respect of this scheme, yet it does not appear from any of your letters, as to whether, in your opinion, the dredging of the bar is a simple matter or one of difficulty. Please let us know, and also collect opinions from the captains and officers of incoming steamers as and when opportunity offers.

Yours faithfully,
R. G. SHAW AND Co.,
Secretaries.

[16692] No. 37.

Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Foreign Office.—(Received April 20.)

3, *Salters' Hall Court, Cannon Street, London, April* 19, 1912.

Sir,

IN reply to your letter of the 16th instant, I have the honour to inform you that the sole object entertained by my board, when applying for permission to tow an extra barge with our steamers, was the transport to Bagdad of the large quantity of cargo accumulated at Bussorah.

I venture respectively to submit that the interpretation placed by this company and their agent at Bussorah, on the permission granted by the Turkish Government for running an extra barge to deal with 3,800 tons of accumulation was under the circumstances a natural interpretation.

The circumstances of the case were that the regular service of steamers and barges had been found insufficient at the time to cope with the ordinary current business of the company. The consequence was a large quantity of cargo had accumulated, and there is no prospect of the regular service being able to deal with the accumulation. The extra barge was applied for to deal specially with the accumulation, thus leaving the regular service free to carry out the ordinary current business.

The total bulk of cargo carried since the date of the permit, that is from the 6th September, 1911, to the 14th March, 1912, was 13,040 tons, of which 1,568 tons were conveyed in the extra barge. The actual accumulation still remaining on the 14th March amounted to about 1,600 tons, shewing that the regular service had to some slight extent been able to assist the extra barge in clearing off the accumulation.

You have called attention to some discrepancy in the amount of cargo reported by us in my letter of the 16th March as carried in the extra barge, and the figures given by our agent at Bussorah to His Majesty's consul. The latest figures in our possession, as received from our agent at Bagdad, show that 1,568 tons were carried between the 6th September, 1911, and the 14th March, 1912, and 990 tons prior to that period by the extra barge, making a total of 2,558 tons. The figures given to His Majesty's consul at Bussorah amounted to 1,450 tons, plus 990 tons, a total of 2,440 tons. The Bagdad figures represent the actual quantity carried whilst those of Bussorah are approximate—the difference being 118 tons only. This explanation sufficiently accounts for the differences noted by His Majesty's Ambassador, given by our agent at Bussorah on the 14th March, and those quoted in our letter of the 16th March.

As regards the interpretation placed on the permission for the extra barge you will, we trust, recognise that we have been acting in good faith in the matter. We hope that His Majesty's Ambassador will see in our explanation sufficient grounds for an application in the sense desired, viz., that we may continue to run the extra barge until it has accomplished the object for which the permission was originally given.

I have, &c.
FRED. W. PARRY,
Acting Secretary.

[16701] No. 38.

Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Foreign Office.—(Received April 20.)

3, *Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London, April* 19, 1912.

Sir,

IN reply to your letter of the 16th instant, we have the honour to inform you that when our Bussorah agents applied for permission to substitute the steam tug "Bulbul" for the tug steam-ship "Julnar" they knew they would not be able to keep three boats running.

Some misunderstanding appears to have arisen as to the applications made for the required permission.

His Majesty's consul at Bussorah applied for permission to run the "Bulbul" as far as Amarah, where the "Julnar" had broken down, in order to convey the mails from that vessel to Bussorah. As, however, the "Julnar" was not sufficiently disabled to prevent her returning to Bussorah with her own engines, there was no necessity to dispatch the "Bulbul" for this purpose.

Our Bussorah agents, knowing the "Julnar" would be laid up for some time under repair on her arrival at Bussorah, and knowing the "Khalifah" was in dry dock, leaving them with only two available steamers to keep up the service of three running steamers, applied for permission to substitute the "Bulbul" for the "Julnar."

Permission was refused by the Vali.

We have now three steamers running and the time for substituting the "Bulbul" for the "Julnar" has passed, but we contemplate docking the "Mejidieh," and as it is within the bounds of possibility that we shall find it necessary to substitute one of the reserve vessels with one of the steamers now running, we beg that instructions may be sent to the Vali of Bussorah to permit us to make the change whenever necessary.

We have, &c.
FRED. W. PARRY,
Acting Secretary.

[16740] No. 39.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 21.)

(No. 55.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Rome, April* 20, 1912.

UP to this evening no information has reached the Italian Government to confirm reports published in press of a bombardment at Samos. I understand that some seventy units in all have been cruising in Ægean Sea, but admiral has as yet reported no action outside that of division which went to the Dardanelles and the capture or destruction of small Turkish war-ships encountered proceeding towards Samos.

[16741] No. 40.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 21.)

(No. 56.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Rome, April* 21, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 158 of 20th April.

Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed himself as grateful for general terms of Sir A. Nicolson's remarks to Italian chargé d'affaires. He understood that Russia had protested against closing the Dardanelles.

He said that he was still without news of what had occurred in other parts of the Ægean Sea, but he discredited rumour of bombardment at Samos because instructions given to Italian admiral fully explained peculiar situation of that island with a view to its being excluded from sphere of operations.

16722] No. 41.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 21.)

(No. 112.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, April 21, 1912.*

TCHESME and the wireless telegraphy station were bombarded yesterday by Italians.

[16724] No. 42.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 21.)

(No. 114.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, April 21, 1912.*

MY telegram No. 112 of to-day.
Bombardment limited to destruction of wireless telegraphy station.

[16795] No. 43.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 308.)
Sir, *Constantinople, April 14, 1912.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 65 of the 20th February last, relative to Mr. D'Arcy's interests in the oilfields of the vilayet of Mosul, you have expressed the desire to learn the grounds on which I based the view, conveyed in my despatch No. 101 of the 2nd February last, that no useful steps could be taken at the present stage to promote Mr. D'Arcy's interests, and you at the same time pointed out that there was reason to fear that continued inaction on the part of His Majesty's Embassy might lead the Turkish Government to believe that His Majesty's Government no longer took an interest in the matter. As I endeavoured to point out in that despatch, the impediment to any progress in the negotiations entered into by Mr. Nichols (Mr. D'Arcy's representative) with the Turkish Government for the concession of the Mosul oilfields has been the scheme put forward by Mr. Chester, on behalf of an American group, for the construction of an extensive network of railways in Asia Minor. As you are doubtless aware, Mr. Chester has asked for no kilometric guarantees, but demanded the right to work all mines discovered and situated within a certain radius of the proposed railway. In the face of such a comprehensive scheme submitted for the consideration of the Turkish Government, Mr. Nichols has, I understand, found it impossible to make any headway with his own proposals, nor was he, when last in Constantinople, apparently in a position to suggest the lines on which His Majesty's Embassy could reasonably and usefully intervene on his behalf. As I had the honour to point out in my despatch, it was at one time believed that, as a consequence of the debate which took place at one of the last sittings of the Chamber, the Porte would be disinclined to continue negotiations with Mr. Chester, and that his scheme would be definitively set aside, and this belief was to some extent justified by the fact that Mr. Chester had been permitted to withdraw his deposit of 10,000*l.* and had left the country. Had the Government taken that course, the field would have been clear for Mr. Nichols to resume negotiations under somewhat less adverse conditions, but it soon became evident that the Chester project had not been abandoned by Government, and that hopes were still entertained that some arrangement would eventually be made for the realisation of part, if not the whole, of the American scheme. Taking all these circumstances into careful consideration, I could come to no other conclusion than that representations made by His Majesty's Embassy, whilst matters were at this stage, would serve no useful purpose, and that it would be preferable to await the further development of negotiations which would, later on, be renewed with the Chester group. I have been watching the course of events since Djavid Bey took over the direction of the affairs of the Public Works Department. One of the measures taken by him shortly after his accession to office was to submit the Chester project to a thorough examination by a special commission composed of officers of the general staff and several engineers belonging to the technical department of the Ministry of Public Works. It is now reported that this commission has recommended certain modifications of the project, but from information obtained I understand that

the Chester group is disinclined to recommence negotiations unless the modifications it is proposed to introduce are of a nature which will relieve the projected enterprise of certain conditions the former Minister of Public Works, Houloussi Bey, sought to impose. These conditions would practically have rendered the scheme an unworkable one, and were consequently not accepted by Mr. Chester.

I may add that Mr. Nichols has been absent from Constantinople for a considerable period; if Mr. D'Arcy is in possession of any recent information which would lead to the belief that the moment had arrived for approaching the Turkish Government, I would venture to think that Mr. Nichols should be on the spot in order to resume the negotiations, and in that case he would receive all proper assistance from his Majesty's Embassy when necessary.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[16796] No. 44.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 309.)
Sir, *Constantinople, April 14, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I received recently from His Majesty's consul-general at Bagdad a telegram stating that he had received private information from a member of the Bagdad Railway staff that it was proposed to construct a railway for the carriage of railway material between Bagdad and Samarra, on the east side of the Tigris, and that there was talk of sending presently two engineer brigades to survey between Khanikin and Bagdad.

From the enquiries which I have caused to be made I have been unable to obtain any confirmation of these reports. It seems hardly likely, moreover, that a railway should be built solely for the carriage of material.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[16799] No. 45.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 312. Very Confidential.)
Sir, *Constantinople, April 15, 1912.*

A REPORT recently reached me from His Majesty's consul-general at Bagdad to the effect that a certain Yakub Issayi had obtained permission under the name of the "National Ottoman Syndicate" to navigate the Trigris with three steamers and six barges. It is believed that the capital engaged in this enterprise was British, belonging to Pauling's and others, and that Yakub Issayi's London correspondent is one Faust-Lurion, of Fenchurch Street. I have caused enquiries to be made here discreetly as to the truth of this report, and have now learned from a very confidential source that this man Yakub Issayi has obtained a permit from the Vali of Bagdad to run two tugs and four barges on the Tigris. The necessary formalities have, it seems, been accomplished here, and the consent of the Ottoman Government has been obtained for the formation of a national syndicate to work this permit. Some of the members of this syndicate are Turks who are in Constantinople, and it is said that Carasso is a member of the business. As far as I can ascertain, Pauling's are only indirectly interested in the concern, that is to say, that the people in London who are at present backing him in Turkish public works schemes have consented to put up all the necessary capital. These people would appear to be Railton's, an important firm of engineers and constructors, a certain Van Oury, and possibly also Erlanger's.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[16801] No. 46.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 314. Confidential.)
Sir, *Constantinople, April 16, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Erzeroum reporting a conversation between him and the commander of the 9th Ordu regarding Turkey's military precautions against a Russian advance on the eastern frontier.

The decision taken by the Turkish military authorities to concentrate the 9th Army Corps at Erzeroum and to move another division to Baiburt was, according to Mahmud Shevket, taken, in principle, some time ago, as it soon became apparent that the redistribution introduced a year ago left the Turkish force on the Russian frontier too weak. There does not, however, appear to be any intention of moving more than one division up to Baiburt.

There are only three or four redif battalions east of Erzeroum whose embodiment would be interfered with by a sudden Russian incursion, but the fear of such an incursion seems now to have passed away, for the moment at any rate, and both Russians and Turks seem satisfied to leave things as they are on the frontier.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 46.

Consul McGregor to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 22. Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, April 1, 1912.*

DURING a call which I received from General Ali Fefzi Pasha, commanding the 9th Army Corps, I took occasion to broach the subject of the military situation here with regard to Russia.

His Excellency, who made no allusion whatever to the Persian frontier question, began by stating that, in his opinion, the present threatening attitude of Russia was the outcome of an understanding with Italy, and was dictated by the desire to impose upon Turkey an altogether inadmissible solution of the Tripolitan question. Despite Russian denials of the scope and purpose of the concentration of troops in the Caucasus and the activity displayed in Russia proper, the Turkish military authorities had positive information which left no doubt as to the seriousness of Russia's warlike preparations, and had consequently been compelled to adopt certain precautionary measures in order to provide, as far as possible, against a surprise.

As the various strategic points on the Russian side of the frontier and, in particular, Olti, were strongly garrisoned, the battalion of Ishkhan had been withdrawn, and in addition to the 2nd battalion of the 85th Regiment and the 1st battalion of the 29th Regiment of Field Artillery from Baiburt (see my telegram No. 12 of yesterday's date) it had been decided to bring to Erzeroum one of the three divisions now quartered at Erzinjan, while another of the three divisions would be transferred to Baiburt to reinforce the garrison there, as well as at Ispir and Kiskim. As Erzeroum did not afford sufficient accommodation for this increase of its garrison, new barracks would have to be built, but in the meantime the troops would be lodged under canvas. One of the main objects of this movement of troops was to facilitate the collection of the redifs in case of war, because the frontier was unfortunately open, and a sudden inroad of Cossack cavalry would render such an operation practically impossible unless Erzeroum and Baiburt were in a position to retard an advance.

His Excellency further stated that, should hostilities be declared, he did not think any serious attempt would be made to defend Erzeroum, as the Russian superiority in cavalry would make it impossible to check them at Hassan Kale or elsewhere, and the defences of Erzeroum itself were worthless. Moreover, there was no obstacle to a Russian advance in force from Olti and Tortum, and the best policy would consequently be to retire to Erzinjan or even to Sivas. He did not think there need be any apprehension of a Russian attempt to land at Trebizond.

I do not feel competent to comment on these statements, further than to say that, according to the general lay opinion here, the Cossacks could swarm across the frontier

with such rapidity that there could be no question of embodying any redifs in the district between Erzeroum, and the frontier, and that, so great is the anxiety among the Moslem villagers in the plain of Erzeroum that many of them are already seeking quarters in town.

The army contractors here have now been requested to furnish stores up to the full amount stipulated for in their contracts, and prices of foodstuffs, which had already risen on account of the unfavourable harvest outlook, may be expected to become still higher. With regard to the reorganisation of the tribal light cavalry, Ali Fefzi Pasha stated that the difficulties that had arisen were being overcome; but I did not gather that he placed much reliance in the Kurds in case of an immediate conflict.

I have, &c.
P. J. C. McGREGOR.

[17026] No. 47.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 23.)

(No. 318.)
Sir, *Constantinople, April 18, 1912.*

IN your despatch No. 114 of the 25th ultimo, you were good enough to ask my views as to whether, should an opportunity occur of obtaining from the Bagdad Railway Company the transfer to a British Company of the branch of the line from Sadije to Khanikin in return for some concession to Germany elsewhere presumably outside the Turkish Empire, the Turkish Government, would be likely to raise objections to such a transaction.

I assume that the transfer here referred to would be not merely that of the Sadije-Khanikin branch as an isolated line, which would in itself hardly be a desirable acquisition to any British company, but would be part of a larger scheme involving perhaps the eventual reversion to His Majesty's Government of whatever rights and privileges may have been secured under the Potsdam agreement to Germany for railway construction in Persia from Khanikin, in the event of the Russian Government failing to complete and link up their Persian lines with the Khanikin branch within five years after the completion of the latter.

Viewed in this light, though it is somewhat difficult at present perhaps to gauge what the Porte's attitude would be towards such a transaction which would be influenced by the political considerations of the moment, it is probable that the Turkish Government might seize the opportunity to endeavour to obtain from us some political or financial advantage in return for an arrangement which while in no way implying a loss to them would be regarded in the light of granting a favour to us.

In any case any negotiations towards arrangement would have to be concluded *à trois*. The Turkish Government would strongly resent any negotiations being carried on between ourselves and the Germans without their knowledge.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[17186] No. 48.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 23.)

(No. 121. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, April 23, 1912.*

MESOPOTAMIAN irrigation.

Result of tenders put in on 20th April :—

Jacksons, for both sections, £T. 4,000,264; Pearsons, £T. 3,880,000. Time required by the former was one year longer than the latter.

Batignolles made no offer and Paulings requested that theirs might be returned to them.

[17234] No. 49.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received April 24.*)

India Office, April 23, 1912.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant respecting the formation of a syndicate to undertake the transport by river for the Bagdad Railway Company from Bussorah upwards, and, in certain contingencies, to maintain its fleet of vessels on Turkish internal waters, after the completion of the railway.

Under article 9 of the convention of the 5th March, 1903, such transport may be effected during the period of construction only by vessels procured or hired by the Bagdad Railway Company; the admission therefore of a British company to a share in this enterprise appears to the Marquess of Crewe to be satisfactory. Nor, as at present advised, does he see any objection to the provision that the fleet of the Anglo-German syndicate—which may become an Anglo-German-Turkish company—may, after the construction of the railway, be retained on the river for some other purpose, with the consent of the Turkish Government, provided that no monopoly is conferred thereby, that no infringement is involved of such rights of navigation as may be enjoyed by British subjects under existing agreements and treaties or by usage, and that no means are secured to the syndicate of manipulating rates either to the detriment of British commerce or in such a way as to render competition with the railway between Bagdad and Bussorah ineffective.

It will presumably be necessary for His Majesty's Government to see the exact terms of the contract before any promise of approval or support can be given to Messrs. Lynch's scheme.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

[17301] No. 50.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received April 24.*)

(No. 57.) *Rome, April 24, 1912.*
(Telegraphic.) *Decode.*

"OFFICIAL Gazette" announces occupation by second division of first Italian squadron, commanded by Admiral Presbitero, of Island Astropalia or Stanapalia in Ægean, and establishment of base for naval supplies. Occupation of island, which has good anchorage in north and south, is for purposes of impeding traffic in contraband of war. Press announces arrival in Rome of Admiral Viale, commanding naval forces, to confer with Government. He will return to-day.

[16000] No. 51.

Joint Minute by Sir A. Hirtzel and Mr. Parker on the Turkish Government's Memorandum communicated on April 15, 1912.

1. BAGDAD RAILWAY.

(a.) *Division of Share-capital in the Bagdad Bussorah Section.*

HIS Majesty's Government originally proposed, in July 1910, that British interests should be represented by 55 per cent. of the total share-capital.

Turkey replied that she would prefer a distribution of 40 per cent. for herself, of 20 per cent. to Germany, 20 per cent. to France, and 20 per cent. to England.

To this, in July 1911, His Majesty's Government made a counter-proposal that the distribution should be 20 per cent. each to Turkey, France, Germany, England, and Russia; the idea being to secure 60 per cent., or a majority, to the 3 *Entente* Powers: England, France, and Russia.

Turkey now professes to fall in with the British view, by distributing the capital equally between herself, France, Germany, and England, in the proportion of 25 per cent. each, the Chairmanship and casting vote being reserved to Turkey! No mention is made of Russia; but, in our informal discussions, the Turks intimated that they would not willingly admit Russia, and that, if His Majesty's Government persisted, they would have to introduce another country, say Switzerland, to counterbalance her.

The effect of giving 25 per cent. to each of four Powers, and allotting to Turkey a casting vote, would be to place control in the hands of the Turco-German group, in so far as control does actually depend on the percentage of capital held. Control probably does depend upon the voting rights of the various sections of shareholders in so far as the appointment of a manager* and other high officials and similar matters are concerned. But though the control to be exercised by the Board of Directors will not be absolute (since it is proposed to fix by Convention the maximum and minimum scales of tariff rates and many details regarding transport facilities), and it is therefore possible to attach too great importance to the distribution of the share-capital as a means of control, we cannot recommend acceptance of the Turkish proposal, which we believe would be generally regarded as politically a defeat of His Majesty's Government, while financially the small amount of British capital that would find employment would cause great disappointment.

Sir H. Babington-Smith has expressed his belief that Turkey, on the analogy of her holding in the Bagdad Railway, which is only 10 per cent., would be satisfied with a share of 10 per cent. or 15 per cent. in the Bagdad–Bussorah section, and he appears to have discussed the subject with the Turkish Ambassador in London. But we are led to think that his impression is erroneous; since the Turkish delegates represented to us that Turkey, as the territorial Power, was already making a great concession in limiting her share to the same amount as that of the other Powers participating and Djévad Bey has since forcibly expressed the same view in writing.

Unless some *via media* can be found between the proposal of His Majesty's Government for five Powers, and the Turkish proposal for four Powers, a deadlock may be reached.

If, for political reasons, it is desired to retain Russian participation, His Majesty's Government might perhaps reply that they cannot agree to the distribution suggested by Turkey (four Powers at 25 per cent. each) and that they therefore revert to the proposal made last July of 20 per cent. to each Power (Turkey, France, Germany, England, and Russia), but that they would be willing to agree to the President of the Company being a Turk. By this arrangement of a Turkish President, Turkey would be in a position *nominally* superior to the foreign countries, and this would make the agreement more acceptable to the Ottoman Parliament. But we anticipate great reluctance on the part of Turkey to any arrangement admitting Russian participation.

We have already expressed the view that the control to be exercised by the Board will be unusually circumscribed; but, such as it is, it will, in so far as it is to serve British interests, be dependent upon the continued solidarity of the *Entente* Powers. The proposal made by His Majesty's Government last July is based upon the assumption that, during the whole period of the concession—that is, for 99 years at least—the general policy of His Majesty's Government and the Governments of France and Russia will be such as to insure concerted action on the railway Board, and it presupposes that the Governments concerned will be able to control the policy of their financiers, which in the case of France at least is more than doubtful. We venture to suggest that it may in future prove inconvenient that our interests should depend upon the co-operation of France and Russia on the Board, since the necessity of insuring concerted action by the three Powers in Mesopotamia may handicap British policy in other quarters.

Moreover, it must be remembered that Russian commercial interests are here contrary to our own, since the value of this section to us—at all events for many years to come—lies in the fact that it will enable us more easily to pour our goods into Western and Northern Persia where at present Russia is our only rival.

We are accordingly far from being persuaded that it is in the interests of this country to insist upon Russian participation in the Bagdad–Bussorah section; and we venture to think that it would be better to provide for the Russian Government by participation in the Khanikin branch, to which, on terms, the German Government might assent, though the last-mentioned consideration applies to this course also.

* We might stipulate that the Manager should be British.

It must not be overlooked that Turkey is not altogether a free agent in regard to the distribution of capital, since the Bagdad Railway Company has reserved the right to a share equal to that obtained by any foreign country in the Bagdad–Bussorah sections.

(b.) *Proposed international convention providing for the exclusion of differential rates on any railways in Asiatic Turkey; for the alignment of the railway south of Bagdad, and the conditions under which it is to be constructed; and for guaranteeing that the interest in the enterprise of the several parties concerned shall be of lasting duration and not subject to termination on the expiry of the Bagdad Railway Company's concession.*

No specific mention is made in the Turkish reply of the "international convention" which His Majesty's Government desire, but we understood from the Turkish delegates that no objection would be raised to it.

With regard to the exclusion of differential treatment, the Turkish Government declare themselves ready to assure to British commerce all facilities compatible with the agreements already concluded by Turkey with the Bagdad Railway Company. This limitation no doubt principally refers to the "Cahier des Charges" or specification attached to the Bagdad Railway Convention of 1903, and there is some force in the contention of the Turkish Government that their hands are tied so far as concerns rates on the Bagdad Railway. The specification is composed of technical details, and it would be well to ask the Board of Trade and Government of India to cause an expert examination of the schedule of rates to be made, so as to ascertain whether they are of a nature to serve or to militate against British-Indian trade.

At first sight the Turkish reply on this point, the exclusion of differential rates, seems satisfactory.

Sir H. Babington-Smith has suggested that it is of great importance to provide that the facilities and rates on the Khanikin branch shall be the same for goods arriving from the Gulf as for those arriving from the Mediterranean. In this view we entirely agree.

The Turkish Government are ready to meet His Majesty's Government in regard to the alignment and the financial arrangements, subject to the arrangement of details.

On the other hand, they say that they are not prepared to agree to the arrangement to be arrived at for the Bagdad-Bussorah sections being of lasting duration, instead of subject to termination on the expiry of the Bagdad Railway concession. This is a point of some importance; and we do not think His Majesty's Government would be well advised to modify the attitude they have taken up on this question. In any case, if the principle of re-purchase by the Turkish Government is admitted, the exercise of such a right should be made subject to an undertaking that the present agreement in regard to the exclusion of differential treatment should not be departed from."

(c.) *Pecuniary indemnity to be paid to the Bagdad Railway Company in respect of its renunciation of the right to construct the section of the railway between Bagdad and the Persian Gulf.*

The Turkish Government say that this charge must be borne by the proposed new company for the railway south of Bagdad. It was always supposed that this would be so; and we cannot well object. Indeed, Sir H. Babington Smith has pointed out that this is really Turkey's affair: Germany claims 2,000*l.* for each kilometre abandoned by her; and Sir H. Babington-Smith has suggested that Turkey would do well to offer bonds of the face value of 2,000*l.* in place of cash, especially since the value of these bonds has fallen about 10 per cent. during the present war.

(d.) *River Dues.*

It seems equitable that Turkey should impose such dues *for services rendered* in dredging and such like operations in the Shatt-el-Arab; but we propose to discuss this point further in relation to the proposed riverain commission.

* I understood them to say that if the Bagdad Railway Concession were extended, the other should be extended also. Could we not compromise on that?—A. H. I agree.—A. J.

(e.) *Prolongation of the Railway from Bussorah to the Persian Gulf.*

His Majesty's Government proposed, and Turkey agrees, that the best terminus for the moment would be Bussorah.

But His Majesty's Government further proposed that, in the event of the railway ever being prolonged to the Persian Gulf, it must be brought to Koweit under conditions to be settled by agreement between Great Britain and Turkey alone, and that a clause to this effect must be inserted *now* in a convention dealing with these matters.

Turkey replies that there is no present cause for contemplating a continuation of the railway beyond Bussorah, but that, nevertheless, the Turkish Government are prepared to give to His Majesty's Government all assurances necessary to disperse any anxieties which may be felt concerning the continuation in question.

His Majesty's Government have every reason to insist upon a settlement of this question now, when they are negotiating for a general settlement, and possess the powerful lever of the customs increase.

The Turkish delegates have represented that Turkey could not agree to the terminus of this Turkish line being under the control of either an Arab Sheikh or a foreign Power.

The Turkish point of view is intelligible; and it was partly owing to the difficulty of finding a satisfactory solution otherwise that His Majesty's Government suggested that the railway should stop at Bussorah. We think therefore that His Majesty's Government should maintain the view, in which the Turkish Government acquiesce, that the principal terminus should be at Bussorah, and that the prolongation to the Gulf should merely be regarded as a branch. But there is some danger that the Turkish Government might, if they could not secure arrangements satisfactory to them at Koweit, bring the Gulf branch to Um Kasr or elsewhere, and that the Sheikh of Koweit might deplore such a development. The Sheikh seemed gratified in 1907 when His Majesty's Government concluded the lease of the foreshore, as he interpreted the transaction as a clear indication that the terminus of the Bagdad Railway would be at Koweit, and consequently that the commercial wealth of the port would be increased. But we would not attach too great weight to this consideration provided that the Sheikh's position is secured.

We accordingly think it important that the Turkish Government should be induced to bind themselves to bring the branch from Bussorah to the Gulf, if and when constructed, to Koweit under conditions to be settled at the time between Turkey and Great Britain; but that the position of Bussorah, as the real terminus, should be emphasised, and that the continuation to Koweit should be characterised as a branch line in the further negotiations with Turkey.

(f.) *Proposed construction and control of the port at Bussorah by the new railway company in the interests of the unrestricted commerce of all nations.*

Turkey ignores, in her reply, the question of the construction and control of the terminal port at Bussorah.

The Turkish delegates did, however, intimate to us verbally that Turkey would agree to the construction of the port at Bussorah by the new company. They did not mention control; and probably such measures as police control would have to remain, as at present, in Turkish hands. But it is desirable that control of the port should be entrusted to the proposed riverain commission.

2.—Political and Territorial Questions.

(See map annexed.*)

(a.) *El Katr.*

Here there is complete divergency between the Turkish and the British point of view.

The Turkish Government have maintained a post at El Bidan for 40 years; and the Turkish Delegates have emphasised the difficulty there would be in reconciling parliamentary opinion to the abandonment of territory which Turkey has never formally renounced; and they represented that such a surrender would be particularly difficult to justify at a time when public opinion is smarting under the loss of Tripoli. They therefore urged that British interests might be reconciled, with a consolidation of Turkish

* Not reproduced.

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PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

dominion in El Katr; but from this view the British Resident in the Persian Gulf and the Government of India emphatically dissent.

It appears to us that there is nothing in the Turkish agreement that would justify His Majesty's Government in abandoning one iota of the claims advanced in the memorandum of July 1911, seeing that an important object, in embarking on a settlement of Gulf questions was to eliminate the Turks from the peninsula.

We consider that His Majesty's Government should protest energetically against the Turkish attempt to whittle away the assurances (see Annexe 1) given by the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and repeatedly given, to the effect that Turkey did not entertain any intention of obtaining the supremacy over Bahrein, Muscat, and the independent tribes on the coast of the Persian Gulf; though Turkey did (in the person of Midhat Pasha) argue that there were no independent tribes in Nedjd.

(b.) *Bahrein.*

The Turkish reply on this point is, we think, fairly satisfactory. We understood from the Turkish delegates that Turkey is prepared to agree to Bahreinis having British Consular protection in Turkey, but not rights under the Capitulations, and this appears a reasonable attitude.

(c). *Zakhnuniych Island.*

According to the Turkish delegates this isle is connected at low tide with the mainland. It is however opposite a portion of the mainland which is south of Ojeir, the most southerly limit to which His Majesty's Government have ever recognised Turkish influence, and this attempt to establish themselves on the island seems to date only from 1909.

(d.) *Koweit.*

The Turkish reply evades a direct answer to much that was written in the British memorandum of July 1911.

We consider that no useful purpose would be served by entering into a controversy as to past history, and that it would be expedient to reply to the Turkish Government that, while His Majesty's Government cannot accept or admit the justice of the Turkish contentions, they would be glad to learn whether the Turkish Government are prepared to accept the settlement suggested by His Majesty's Government last July, in the following paragraph:—

British trade relations with the Sheikhs of Koweit have existed for upwards of two centuries and, inasmuch as the place has attracted merchants from all quarters by the equity of its rule and the freedom of its trade, His Majesty's Government could not consent to any interference with the succession or with the internal administration, or any infringement of the complete autonomy of the Sheikh. On the other hand, they are prepared to recognise Turkish suzerainty over Koweit, and to recognise the Sheikh as a Turkish Kaimakam, provided in other respects the *status quo* is guaranteed, and the validity of certain agreements which the Sheikh has concluded with the British Government is recognised; provided the islands of Warba and Bubian are admitted by Turkey to be within the confines of Koweit, and Turkish military posts are withdrawn; and provided finally the Sheikh is admitted to the full and undisturbed enjoyment of any properties he may own or hereafter purchase on Turkish territory. Koweit would thus form a sort of *enclave* within, and forming part of, the Ottoman Empire, but enjoying complete self-government under Turkish suzerainty.

As regards the limits of Koweit it may be mentioned that in 1908 and again in 1910 the British agents toured over the whole of the country claimed by His Majesty's Government without finding traces of any influence there except that of the Sheikh. But for the moment it is perhaps unnecessary to make any further reference to this subject, though unless the limits are eventually defined misunderstanding is certain to arise. Meanwhile we consider that the Turkish Government should be informed that His Majesty's Government could not agree to conclude an arrangement with Turkey if the military post is maintained at Bubiyan Island; and we consider that it would be impracticable to transfer our agreements with the Sheikh in the manner suggested in the Turkish reply.

(e.) *Riverain Commission for the Shatt-el-Arab.*

Instead of the joint Commission proposed by His Majesty's Government, the Turkish Government suggest an Ottoman Commission, with a British engineer on

it in the service of the Turkish Government, in order to avoid the appearance of internationalisation which it is their interest (and ours) to avoid. We understood from the delegates that the Commission would consist of two members only, and that the British representative would be in every respect equal to his Turkish colleague, and further that he would be free to correspond with the British Government as he pleased. Provided that his rights are secured by the Convention, and that it is also arranged that the two Governments shall agree as to the individual to be appointed, we think this may be accepted. But His Majesty's Government's further proposal that the executive engineer should be British should be insisted on.

As soon as this Commission does any real work, the question of dues must come up, though so long as the expenditure is small, it may be possible to avoid it. But if the ownership of the Shatt is on other grounds adjudged to Turkey, the Turkish right to levy dues is undeniable, and if the dues are fixed by a Commission, constituted as proposed, its exercise seems harmless. The Turkish Government would undertake that there shall be no differential treatment of British shipping, and this should be embodied in the Convention. The Board of Trade might be asked to advise as to any other conditions that may be necessary.

The Turkish delegates were anxious that it should be understood that all pilotage in the Shatt-el-Arab would be controlled by the Commission, and this may be agreed to.

(f.) *Pilotage, &c., in the Gulf.*

This is not mentioned in the Turkish reply, and His Majesty's Government should repeat their claim to control it themselves. At the same time, it seems desirable to define the limits of territorial waters, on the basis of the Government of India's telegram of the 18th April, and a chart, on which they are clearly shown might form an annex to the Convention. It would be agreed that any of the existing British buoys, &c., or of those about to be laid down by us, which might be found to be in Turkish waters, would pass with the control of the Riverain Commission.

(g.) *Policing of the Gulf.*

Turkey desires to carry this out jointly with Great Britain. It is evident from this proposal, and from the proposal that they should consolidate themselves on El Katr, as well as from the general attitude of the Turkish delegates, that what the Turks are aiming at is, under the proposed settlement, not only to secure what they already possess on sufferance, but also to obtain a footing which they have never had before. Now whatever may be said from the point of view of law, history, or policy, for the former aim, there is clearly no justification for the latter, and His Majesty's Government, whose whole object is to get the Turks, as far as possible, out of the Gulf, can clearly, in no circumstances, acquiesce in it. We submit that this should be made quite plain, and it might be well to remind the Turks of Lord Lansdowne's statement in the House of Lords on the 5th May, 1903, that "we should regard the establishment of a naval base, or of a fortified port, in the Persian Gulf, by any other Power as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal."

The next step would seem to act as suggested under (*d*) on p. 38.

A. HIRTZEL.
ALWYN PARKER.

April 24, 1912.

[17360] No. 52.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 25.)

Sir, *India Office, April* 24, 1912.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant regarding the difficulties placed by the Turkish authorities at Bussorah in the way of the execution by Messrs. Lynch of steaming trials on the Shatt-el-Arab with their tug the "Bulbul."

It does not appear to the Marquess of Crewe that any question as to the ownership of the river or rights of international navigation are necessarily raised by the Turkish action, and he would prefer to take the line that the Turkish Government,

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having conferred upon Messrs. Lynch's company the right of navigating the river, must be held at the same time to have conferred upon them the right of taking, within reason, all necessary measures for the purpose of such navigation, among which the performance of trial trips must be included, provided that such trips are not used for the conveyance of passengers or merchandise. From this point of view his Lordship is of opinion that there has been a contravention of the arrangement with Messrs. Lynch, and he would recommend that a protest should accordingly be made to the Turkish Government.

I am to take this opportunity of adverting to the larger question of navigation dealt with in the despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, No. 228, dated the 19th March last, and to say that Lord Crewe is of opinion that it is very undesirable that the Vali of Bagdad's notice should be allowed to pass unchallenged, since experience has shown that the silence of His Majesty's Government in such circumstances is liable to be interpreted and quoted at a later date by the Turkish Government as acquiescence. It seems to Lord Crewe to be quite clear from articles 4 and 6 of the sened of the 24th February, 1784, that British subjects, as subjects of the most favoured nation, enjoy the right of direct trading on all the internal waters of Turkey, and the fact that His Majesty's Government have not at all times insisted on that right, or, in particular cases, have based their claims on other considerations, does not seem to him to derogate from the effective validity of the sened. The question of *cabotage fluvial* is different, and his lordship is disposed to take the view that, if such a right is contrary to the ordinary law and usage of nations, the absence of special mention of it in existing treaties and agreements must be interpreted as reserving it to the Turkish Government.

But for the present purpose it does not seem necessary to differentiate between the two, and I am to suggest that, if Sir E. Grey agrees, Sir G. Lowther should be instructed to inform the Porte merely that His Majesty's Government regard the Vali of Bagdad's notice as infringing the rights conferred by articles 4 and 6 of the sened. The Turkish reply will doubtless show if any further action is required. I am also to suggest that this communication should be made as soon as possible, to obviate the risk of claims being based by the Turkish Government on the vali's notice as part of the *status quo* in the Shatt-el-Arab.

I am, &c,
R. RITCHIE.

[16701] No. 53.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No 161.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April 25, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 152 of the 16th instant relative to the running of Messrs. Lynch's steamers on the Mesopotamian rivers, I transmit to your Excellency herewith copy of a further letter from the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, asking that instructions may be sent to the Vali of Bussorah to permit the substitution of one of their reserve vessels for one of the three now running whenever this may be necessary.*

A copy of the reply returned to this communication is also enclosed.†

Your Excellency should use your discretion as to approaching the Turkish Government in the sense desired by the company.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[16701] No. 54.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Co.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 25, 1912.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, asking that instructions may be sent to the Vali of Bussorah to permit the substitution of one of your reserve steamers for one of the three now running on the Mesopotamian rivers whenever this may be necessary.

* No. 88. † No. 54.

I am to inform you in reply that a copy of your communication has been forwarded to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, who has been given discretion as to what action, if any, he shall take to give effect to your wishes in the matter.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[17619] No. 55.

Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received April 26.)

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Board of Trade, April 25, 1912.*

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th April, forwarding copy of a letter from the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company (Limited), relative to the formation of a syndicate for the transport by river of material for the Bagdad Railway Company, and to offer the following observations thereon for Sir E. Grey's consideration.

The Board gather that the operations of the new syndicate are to be confined to the transport of railway material, or that if permission to carry general cargo be obtained, it will be confined to downward cargo at rates not lower than those charged by the steamship companies operating on the Mesopotamian rivers. They also understand that there is no intention of incorporating in the new service that of the Euphrates and Tigris Company, which will continue as a separate undertaking, and that the new fleet will be removed from Turkish internal waters so soon as the construction of the railway is completed unless some arrangement for its employment is then made with the Turkish Government. These points, however, are not all equally clear, and the Board suggest that the company should be asked to state definitely whether the foregoing actually represents the facts.

In all the circumstances, and especially in view of the fact that under article 9 of their concession the Bagdad Railway Company are entitled to carry building and other materials necessary for railway construction in their own boats should they deem that course desirable, the Board are disposed to think that, if the foregoing summary is correct, His Majesty's Government need raise no objection to the general nature of the scheme, which would appear to secure for the United Kingdom a substantial share in this particular carrying trade and in the construction of the necessary vessels. It does, however, appear to them desirable that an effort should be made to obtain from the Euphrates and Tigris Company an undertaking that they will not transfer the whole or any part of their interest in the new company or in the proposed Anglo-German-Turkish Company without giving adequate (say six months') notice to His Majesty's Government, and that an intimation should be conveyed to the company that His Majesty's Government reserve their right to take such action as they may consider necessary should any scheme be put forward for the utilisation of the new fleet in Mesopotamian internal waters after the railway from the north has reached Bagdad.

The Euphrates and Tigris Company do not state under what flag the new vessels are to run, and I am to suggest that, should Sir E. Grey see no objection, an inquiry might be addressed to them on this point.

I am, &c.
H. LLEWELLYN SMITH.

[17468] No. 56.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 120.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, April 25, 1912.*

FOLLOWING from consul at Salonica, No. 7 :—

"Italian cruiser visited Dafne on Tuesday night; three Italian ships passed Mount Athos eastward during the same night; three appeared off Rhodes and two off Marmaris yesterday.

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[16686] No. 57.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 26, 1912.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 18th ultimo, relative to the dredging of the Shatt-el-Arab bar, I am to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter to Mr. Greenway on the subject of the offer of the Vali of Bussorah to support an application by a British firm for a concession to undertake this work,* together with a copy of that gentleman's reply.†

I am to state that, in view of the fact that negotiations are still in progress with the Turkish Government for an adjustment of British and Turkish interests in those regions, and that any step of the nature in question might be considered by Turkey to involve a modification of the *status quo* to her disadvantage, Sir E. Grey is disposed, if the Marquess of Crewe concurs, to ask that, if any such application has been made, it may be withdrawn pending a settlement of the questions at issue.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[17806] No. 58.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 27th April, 1912, regarding the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab.

India Office, April 27, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 58.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *April 27, 1912.*

SHATT-EL-ARAB navigation. Please refer to your telegram dated the 10th instant.

Our present reply deals only with question of Ottoman Riverain Commission's constitution. We will reply as soon as possible to other points, as to which views of resident, Persian Gulf, are still awaited.

We agree to acceptance of proposal regarding British member, subject, if possible, to proviso that there be only two members of the commission (*i.e.*, one Turk beside the British member in employment of Turkey), as well as to the proviso mentioned. But a British engineer should, we consider, be appointed as expert adviser to the commission, in order that full consideration of British and Persian interests may be ensured. Appointment of engineer should be subject to same condition as that of British member; he would of course be not a member of the commission but its servant.

[17846] No. 59.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 342.)

Sir, *Constantinople, April 23, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch, for transmission to the War Office, from the military attaché to this embassy, reporting and commenting on the appointment of Hussein Pasha of Patnotz as honorary commandant of the 16th Regiment of Tribal Light Cavalry.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

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* No. 6. † No. 36.

Enclosure in No. 59.

Major Tyrrell to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 29.)

Sir, *Constantinople, April 20, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to report that an announcement has recently appeared in the "Official Gazette" of the appointment of one, Hussein Pasha, to be honorary commandant of the 16th Regiment of Tribal Light Cavalry, with the rank of Liva (Major-General).

This appointment has made a painful impression on Armenians here, and has doubtless had an even worse effect in Kurdistan, for this man is the notorious Haideranli chief, Kyör Hussein Pasha, of Patnotz, one of the most distinguished of Abdul Hamid's instruments of oppression. After the revolution of 1908 he was in disgrace, and was even at one time, I believe, a refugee in Persia. His apparent return to favour while questions concerning Armenian villages (one might say "districts") which he has confiscated or usurped are still unsettled must make a bad impression abroad as well as in Turkey.

I mentioned this extraordinary appointment to a very intelligent Colonel of the General Staff, an upholder of the Committee of Union and Progress, with whom I was talking politics the other day. He said that there was no need for me to expatiate on it or to tell him about Hussein Pasha, as no one regretted more than himself that such appointments should be made. "But," he said, "it is the fault of you foreigners. Why can't you leave us alone? The Russians are buying the Kurdish chiefs, and we have to bribe men like Hussein Pasha in this way to keep them away from the Russians."

As this bears out what Mr. McGregor and Captain Molyneux-Seel have said from time to time about Russian intrigues among the Kurdish chiefs, I think it is worth reporting to your Excellency.

The mere possibility of this certainly makes it most difficult for the Turkish Government to alienate these Kurdish chiefs by redressing the Armenian grievances about their lands.

I have, &c.
G. E. TYRRELL,
Military Attaché.

[17849] No. 60.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 345. Confidential.)

Sir, *Constantinople, April 24, 1912.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 121 of the 23rd instant, I have the honour to submit to you the following figures, which have been communicated to me confidentially, showing the result of the tenders for the Mesopotamian irrigation contract submitted by Jackson's and Pearson's to the Ottoman Government :—

	Jackson's Tender.	Pearson's Tender.
For the 1st section	2,730,000*l.*	2,380,000*l.*
For the 2nd section	1,534,000*l.*	1,500,000*l.*
Time required for 1st section	5 years	4 years
Time required for 2nd section	5½ years	5 years

Batignolles made no offer, and though Messrs. Pauling put in a tender, their representative asked that it might be returned to him.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

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[18224] No. 61.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received April 30.)

(No. 133.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, April 29, 1912.*

FOLLOWING from consul at Bussorah to-day :—

"I am informed that Kaimakam of Fao is in communication with vali about the removal of British buoys.

"I have no evidence that such action is contemplated, but vali again visited Fao and the bar last week with the commodore and Sabieh Bey, major on the staff from Constantinople, who is said to be about to visit Bushire. Turkish light-ship was re-provisioned, five more marines placed on board.

"It would be well to have our buoys watched, as it would be easy to cut them adrift from the Turkish light-ship.

"(Sent to Constantinople; repeated to Bushire.)"

[18407] No. 62.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received May 1.)

Sir, *Admiralty, April 29, 1912.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 10th instant, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to request that you will inform the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that they consider the establishment of the light-vessel outside the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab essential to safe navigation, for the following reasons :—

2. The light-vessel as originally proposed by the commander-in-chief, East Indies, was not absolutely essential to safety nor necessary for actually crossing the bar, for which the buoys sufficed, but it was desirable in order to assist vessels in approaching the bar.

3. In the meantime, the survey of the approaches to the Shatt-el-Arab, commenced by the "Palinurus," have revealed dangers of as little as 18 feet of water at distances outside the bar of as much as 11 miles, and beyond the radius of the Turkish light-vessel.

4. It is therefore now more than ever desirable and in fact essential to safe navigation that a light-vessel should be established in the approaches to guard these dangers, and at a distance outside the bar of about 10 miles instead of 4 or 5 miles, as originally proposed by the commander-in-chief.

I am, &c.
O. MURRAY.

[17360] No. 63.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 262.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 1, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 82 of 6th April.

Your Excellency should make a written protest against the action of the vali in limiting to one voyage the trial trip of "Bulbul." Your Excellency should point out that the Turkish Government, having conferred on company the right of navigating the river, must be held at the same time to have conferred upon them the right of taking, within reason, all necessary measures for the purpose of such navigation, among which the performance of trial trips must be included, provided that such trips are not used for the conveyance of passengers or merchandise. We consider that from this point of view vali's action amounts to a contravention of the arrangement with company.

Your despatch No. 228 of 19th March.

It is very undesirable that Vali of Bagdad's notice should be allowed to pass unchallenged, since experience has shown that the silence of His Majesty's Government

in such circumstances is liable to be interpreted, and quoted at a later date, as acquiescence.

You should accordingly inform the Porte in writing that His Majesty's Government regard the vali's action as infringing the rights conferred by articles 4 and 6 of the Sened of 24th February, 1784. The Turkish reply will probably show if any further action is required, but, for the present, it is unnecessary for your Excellency to differentiate between "direct trading" and "cabotage fluvial."

[18224] No. 64.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 265.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 1, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 123 of 29th April [buoyage of Persian Gulf].

Your Excellency should inform Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs that an unconfirmed rumour has reached British authorities that the removal by Turkish officials of certain buoys, the property of His Majesty's Government, is contemplated. Should such interference take place, His Majesty's Government would have to cause the buoys to be replaced. Your Excellency should point out to Minister for Foreign Affairs that while the subject in question is under discussion between the two Governments it would be most unfortunate if any such steps as those alleged were to be taken.

(Repeated to Bushire.)

[18545] No. 65.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 2.)

Sir, *India Office, May 1, 1912.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 26th April, regarding the dredging of the Shatt-el-Arab bar, and, in reply, to say that he concurs in the view of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that any application that may have been made by a British firm to undertake the work should be withdrawn for the present, provided that this can be done without the risk of introducing a foreign firm.

It is for consideration whether some communication might not also be made to the Turkish Government on the subject. It might be pointed out to them in a friendly way that it not only desirable politically that the *status quo* should not be disturbed during the negotiations, but that from the technical point of view the dredging of the bar and channel of the Shatt-el-Arab is a complicated and delicate work which should be examined as a whole, and cannot be attempted piecemeal without serious danger to the navigability of the river. This comprehensive examination, it might be suggested, would best be conducted under the auspices of the Riverain Commission which it is hoped will shortly be created.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

[18830] No. 66.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 99.)
Sir, *Rome, April 29, 1912.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 165 of the 24th instant, I have the honour to report that I spoke unofficially to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the recent cutting of cables in the Ægean, and informed him that His Majesty's Government did not question the belligerent right of the Italian Government to act as they had done, but trusted such action would be restricted to cases of real military necessity in view of the grave inconvenience caused to neutral Powers. The Marquis

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di San Giuliano assured me that the Italian Government were fully alive to their responsibilities in this respect, and would only exercise the right when compelled to by military exigencies. It was not always possible to confine such an operation to the actual spot which it was desired to isolate, as this would indicate the objective.

I have, &c.
RENNELL RODD.

[18983] No. 67.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 60.)
(Telegraphic.) *Decode.* *Rome, May 4, 1912.*

PRIME MINISTER announced this afternoon in Chamber that squadron under Admiral Viali with detachment of troops under General Amoglio had occupied island of Rhodes this morning. Telegram from admiral reports landing of troops effected without opposition hitherto.

[18974] No. 68.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 146.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, May 4, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 265 of 1st May.

Minister for Foreign Affairs states that he has sent telegraphic instructions to Vali of Bussorah not to admit any interference with any of the British buoys.

[19066] No. 69.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 372.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May 1, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, reporting on Messrs. Lynch's complaint respecting their reserve steamer, and on the vali's opposition to the trials of the tug "Bulbul."

I concur in Mr. Crow's conclusions, and I should be glad to know whether you are aware on what grounds Messrs. Lynch state that navigation is free as far as Kurna, and what your views are.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 69.

Consul Crow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 20.)
Sir, *Bussorah, April 4, 1912.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram No. 29 of the 2nd April and Messrs. Lynch Brothers' complaint, I have the honour to state that their local agent wrote to me on the 15th March (copy enclosed) regarding proposed trials of the "Bulbul" with two barges on the Shatt-el-Arab.

As your Excellency will see by the date of my telegrams Nos. 37, 38, and 39, this letter was received just at the time when the local authorities directed the company to discontinue the use of two barges.

In deference, however, to Messrs. Lynch Brothers' wishes, I informed the vali of their proposal, pointing out that the "Bulbul's" journey was only by way of experiment, that the tug would not go above Kurna, and hoped his Excellency would see no objection.

The vali replied on the 17th March (copy enclosed) and declined to give permission.

As reported in my telegram No. 16 of the 8th February, the "Bulbul" was hired to the Nahrieh Company for a time, but owing, I understand, to opposition at Bagdad, the arrangement was of short duration, and the agent informed me in reply to my enquiries that the agreement with the Nahrieh Company was off.

The agent called on me with reference to the vali's refusal to allow the trials, and as the company attached importance to them, I suggested he should see the vali himself, and see if he could induce him to permit them.

It was at this juncture that the "Julnar" broke down, the "Khalifa" being still in dock for repairs, and I received a further application from Lynch's agent for permission to send a launch to Amara to keep the mail connection. The vali consented to this on condition Lynch did not make a practice of it, and that only mails were conveyed by the launch. The agent, meanwhile, called on the vali, who so far modified his attitude as to allow one trial of the "Bulbul" with two barges between Bussorah and Fao, but would not permit the tug to ply between Bussorah and Kurna. The agent then asked the vali to allow the "Bulbul" to be sent to Bagdad with one or two barges, having, he afterwards informed me, just received a telegram from his Bagdad office to dispatch the "Bulbul," in view of the "Julnar" breaking down at Amara, and the "Khalifa" being in dock. The vali categorically refused this, and Lynch's agent, who mentioned this further application to me after having seen the vali, stated that he did not think it advisable to press the matter at the present time. Nevertheless, as appears from your Excellency's telegram No. 29 of the 2nd April to me, Messrs. Lynch Brothers based a complaint on the vali's refusal to allow the "Bulbul" to run to Bagdad.

The three steamers "Mejidieh," "Khalifa," and "Blosse Lynch" are now running to Bagdad with one barge each; the "Julnar," a most unsatisfactory type of vessel, needing constant alteration and repair, is temporarily laid up, having broken her propeller; the "Bulbul," a tug brought up from the Karun, has made a trial trip with two barges to Fao; the "Azizeh," a new launch, runs daily to Mohammerah and back with passengers, return fare 1st class £T. 1, and the two other launches, "Ishtar" and "Asp," are employed for local requirements, the former lately having towed material up the Euphrates for Sir John Jackson. Under the circumstances, therefore, an application on behalf of this company to the Sublime Porte for further privileges in respect of their reserve steamer would appear unnecessary, as the three steamers sanctioned are now running.

If, however, it is proposed to give Government assistance to Messrs. Lynch's further representations, which amount to a demand to use a fifth steamer "Bulbul" for reserve purposes in emergency, precise instructions to the vali will be required, as he has not apparently been directed to allow the use of more than one reserve steamer.

His opposition to the "Bulbul" steam trials in the Shatt-el-Arab between Kurna and Fao seems to me less justifiable, provided of course the vessel does not travel above Kurna. It was unfortunate for Lynch that they should have put forward their application to test that tug, with two barges, a few days after orders had been received to discontinue the use of two barges on the Bagdad run. It was also unfortunate that the arrangements for hiring the "Bulbul" to the Nahrieh Company broke down, owing, I believe, to local opposition against any extension of the Lynch service on the river; for the Nahrieh had agreed to tow a certain number of barges for Lynch per month, in addition to paying the cost of the "Bulbul's" running expenses, and there are people here who say that Lynch got very much the best of that bargain, and that it was too good to last. In any case, I think all these questions may have influenced the vali in his refusal. As, however, he modified his previous attitude and permitted the trial below Bussorah, I thought it better not to press the matter at the present juncture, more especially as it involved the disputable point of whether the Shatt-el-Arab is open to foreign navigation as far as Kurna or not. I am not aware that this question has ever been precisely determined, and, being in ignorance of our position, I prefer to await your Excellency's instructions before raising it.

We can, I think, successfully maintain Lynch's right to such trials below Bussorah, though the vali in his letter would seem to imply that Lynch have no right to employ any steamer on the river beyond those allowed for the Bagdad service. He has, however, not attempted, so far, to prevent their launches going backwards and forwards to Mohammerah with passengers, and even if he did try to interfere with the company's arrangements below Bussorah, I do not think the opposition could be taken seriously in view of the foreign shipping generally which visits this port.

The truth is, Lynch has been rather too prominent lately, and anticipation that he

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may increase his business further looms largely in the mind of the Turk. The company always seems to be asking the authorities for something they have not had before. I think this alarms the Turk, and, being naturally suspicious and jealous of foreign extension on the river, he occasionally puts on the curb.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

Enclosure 2 in No. 69.

Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Consul Crow.

Bussorah, March 15, 1912.

Sir,

THE steam-ship "Bulbul."

We expect this tug from Bagdad within the next day or two, and propose to dispatch her shortly after her arrival with two loaded barges for a trial or trials on the Shatt-el-Arab.

As the river is free to navigation as far as Kurna, we propose sending her up river, but not beyond that place.

We shall be obliged if you will communicate with the authorities accordingly, so that they may be aware of our intention in the matter.

We are, &c.
J. DICKSON,
Agent.

Enclosure 3 in No. 69.

Vali of Bussorah to Consul Crow.

IN reply to your letter of the 15th March, I have the honour to state that Messrs. Lynch Brothers have received special permission to work a certain number of steamers in the Shatt-el-Arab.

The running of the tug "Bulbul" with two barges in any way whatsoever exceeds that special permission. Therefore, I must request you to direct Messrs. Lynch Brothers not to carry out the trial you mention. I have instructed the port authorities accordingly.

HASSAN REZA.

March 4 (17), 1912.

[19090] No. 70.

Sir G. Louther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 148.) *Constantinople, May* 6, 1912.
(Telegraphic.) *Decode.*

BRITISH vice-consul at Scala Nuova reports bombardment Rhodes 3rd May.

[17619] No. 71.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

(Confidential.) *Foreign Office, May* 6, 1912.
Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to state that this department has been in consultation with the India Office and Board of Trade on the subject of your letter of the 27th March respecting the agreement reached by your company with the Bagdad Railway Company for the formation of a syndicate to undertake the transport by river for the Bagdad Railway Company from Busorah upwards, and, in certain contingencies, to maintain the fleet of vessels on Turkish internal waters after the completion of the railway.

Before any promise of approval or support can be given to this scheme on behalf of His Majesty's Government, Sir E. Grey must ask to be furnished with the exact terms of the contract which, he understands, has been initialled by the parties, if not actually signed.

In the meantime, I am to inform you that Sir E. Grey would be glad to learn under what flag the new vessels are to run; and I am to state that it is understood from your letter that the operations of the new syndicate are to be confined to the transport of railway material, or that, if permission to carry general cargo be obtained, it will be confined to downward cargo at rates not lower than those charged by the steamship companies operating on the Mesopotamian rivers; that there is no intention of incorporating in the new service that of your company, which will continue as a separate undertaking; that the new fleet will be removed from Turkish internal waters so soon as the construction of the railway is completed, unless some arrangement for its further employment is then made with the Turkish Government; but, inasmuch as all these points are not equally clear, Sir E. Grey would be glad of a definite statement as to whether the foregoing actually represents the facts.

I am further to state that His Majesty's Government reserve their right to take such action as they may consider necessary should any scheme be put forward for the utilisation of the new fleet in Mesopotamian internal waters after the railway from the north has reached Bagdad; and I am to add that Sir E. Grey feels confident that your company will not transfer the whole or any part of your interest to the new company, or in the proposed Anglo-German-Turkish company, without giving six months' notice to His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[16000] No. 72.

Foreign Office to Board of Trade.

(Confidential.) *Foreign Office, May* 7, 1912.
Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, to be laid before the Board of Trade, the accompanying copy of a memorandum,* dated the 15th April, 1912, from the Turkish Ambassador, containing the reply of the Turkish Government to the proposals contained in the British memorandum of the 29th July, 1911.

A copy of a joint minute by Sir A. Hirtzel, of the India Office, and Mr. Parker, of this department, on the Turkish reply is also enclosed.†

Sir E. Grey would be glad to be furnished with the detailed observations of the Board of Trade upon those portions of the Turkish reply which have any bearing upon British commercial interests.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[19464] No. 73.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 108.) *Rome, May* 5, 1912.
Sir,

WITH reference to my telegram No. 60 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to report that the occupation of Rhodes appears to have been effected with great ability and commendable secrecy. The division commanded by General Ameglio was rapidly conveyed from Benghazi to the island, and appears to have been disembarked some distance behind the capital, whence the Turkish garrison withdrew to the heights inland on the appearance of Italian ships to the east and west of the northern point of the island. The landing commenced in the early hours of yesterday morning, and was completed by 2 in the afternoon. General Ameglio rapidly pushed his lines across the headland and advanced towards the city, driving the garrison back towards the city till he had only a front of about 3 kilom. from shore to shore. The Turkish

* No. 24. † No. 51.

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garrison is thus enveloped in a restricted area between the troops and the ships. Up to last evening the Italian losses were reported as including only five wounded, while some sixty Turkish prisoners had been secured. At 7 in the evening General Ameglio halted within half-an-hour of the gates of Rhodes.

I have, &c.
RENNELL RODD.

[20105] No. 74.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 370.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May 3, 1912.*

WHILE the anniversary of the Sultan's accession was being celebrated here by a military review, and by the opening of a new bridge across the Golden Horn, the occasion was marked at Adana by the inauguration by Djavid Bey, Minister of Public Works, in person, of the new section of the Bagdad Railway line.

The length of the section now opened between kilometre 328 and kilometre 468 is of 140 kilom. from Dorak to Mamouret. Of this distance 25 kilom. from Yenidje to Adana are covered by the Adana-Tarsus-Mersina line. The newly opened section covers some of the richest territory in the Empire starting from the southern slopes of the Taurus, and running right through the Adana plain to the foot of the Amanus range.

Between the Konia-Boulgourlou-Oulu-Kishla section of some 240 kilom. in length, and this newly opened stretch from Dorak to Mamouret, there lies the most difficult problem to be faced on the whole line, the 90 kilom. length of line required to traverse the Taurus; of this 36 kilom. will consist entirely of tunnels, and at one point a tunnel will have to be bored extending for 2 kilom. in length. Work is, however, progressing rapidly, and it is expected that in a few months' time 54 kilom. of this difficult portion of the line will be open for traffic.

The crossing of the Amanus range also offers great engineering difficulties, but work is well advanced at this end, and by the end of the year some 150 kilom. more should be open, while the Osmanieh-Alexandretta branch line is to be completed in the course of next year.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[19637] No. 75.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 381. Very Confidential.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May 4, 1912.*

AS you are aware, the question of the appointment of a successor to Youssouf Pasha Franco as Governor of the Lebanon is now pending. In this connection I have the honour to report that His Majesty's consul-general at Beirout has from time to time recommended that the opportunity should be taken to urge on the acceptance of the Porte various modifications of the existing régime, which he conceived would conduce to the better administration of the Mountain. During the past two or three months I have frequently spoken on these matters to the French Ambassador, pointing out to him that if anything were to be done it would be as well if the two embassies should come to an agreement as to what points could and should be urged upon the Porte; but recognising the special concern which France, as the Power protecting Catholic interests in the Ottoman Empire, has in the welfare of the Lebanon, where the Maronites form the large majority of the population, I thought it proper to comply with his Excellency's obvious wish that the initiative should be left to him to draw up definite proposals, and the more so as Mr. Cumberbatch from similar motives had only given me a general outline of his recommendations. But, in spite of my endeavours to expedite matters, and notwithstanding the provision of the protocol of 1861 that the selection of a new governor must be proceeded with three months before the expiration of his predecessor's mandate, M. Bompard has invariably taken the view that there was ample time before us, and it was only on the 30th ultimo that I received from him the

enclosed draft of the measures of reform which he suggests should be submitted to the Porte.

The proposals concern most, but not all, of Mr. Cumberbatch's desiderata, but the remedies are not always on all fours with those proposed by His Majesty's consul-general, and as I do not find in his despatches sufficient data to enable me to judge of the relative merits of the respective proposals, I have telegraphed the substance of the French draft to Mr. Cumberbatch, requesting him to furnish me with his observations thereon. Some of M. Bompard's proposals are obviously open to criticism, but on the others—such, *e.g.*, as Nos. 1, 2, and 3—local knowledge is requisite to enable me to appreciate them and discuss them with my colleague.

The palpable debatable subjects are in the main comprised under the subject of Finance (No. 5). They entail a survey and census of the Lebanon, both relatively costly operations, which, even if spread over the five years of the next Government's term of office, would be a heavy charge on the existing resources of the province. Means may, however, be found to surmount this difficulty, and I will turn to a graver question, viz., the proposal that as a set-off against the arrears of the Porte's contribution to the Treasury of the Lebanon the posts and telegraphs and customs of the province should be handed over to the local administration. I am not aware to what the total of the arrears in question amount, or what proportion the capitalised revenues which M. Bompard would transfer to the Lebanon Government would bear to it; but I feel confident that the Sublime Porte, even if it did not attempt to repudiate liability altogether, will not easily surrender these resources, and will certainly raise the strongest objections to handing over to a local authority services which, in most countries, are rigidly reserved to the Central Government. In practice, moreover, I think that the scheme of local administration proposed by M. Bompard would be found to work less satisfactorily and less economically than a service under the direct control of the Imperial Government.

The proposal of opening four ports on the Lebanon coast is also calculated to prove unpalatable to the Sublime Porte, which is disposed to regard any steamer services to ports not under the control of its own police with disfavour, owing to the facilities which it offers to Ottoman subjects to avoid their military service by emigration.

In handing me these proposals M. Bompard gave me to understand that his desire was that I should examine them, and that the two embassies should combine to press their acceptance on the Porte and on the other interested Powers. I must confess, however, that this procedure appears to me to be unrealisable owing to the very short time—scarcely more than two months—at our disposal. It must be some days before I can receive the observations which I have called for from Mr. Cumberbatch, and, after that, further time will be occupied in discussing the French proposals with M. Bompard. And, finally, we have to overcome the anticipated opposition of the Turks, who may very well be supported in their objections by the German and Austrian Embassies.

Moreover, M. Bompard considers, and I agree with him, that the acceptance by the Porte of any modification of the existing régime in the Lebanon must precede the selection of the new governor, inasmuch as, once the latter question is settled, the Porte will be in a strong position to refuse any or all of the reform proposals. And, unfortunately, the selection of the new governor bids fair to be difficult of settlement.

It therefore appears to me to be materially impossible that two months—Youssouf Pasha's term expires on the 8th July—should suffice to come to an agreement on all these questions, and I am in some doubt as to what attitude I should take *vis-à-vis* of my French colleague.

M. Bompard's proposals presumably have been drawn up on reports from the French consul-general at Beirout, who, I gather from Mr. Cumberbatch's despatches, has not consulted his British colleague about them. Indeed, the French attitude, both here and at Beirout, appears to indicate the assumption that we are ready to give our support unreservedly to any measures which the French may indicate—in fact, to recognise in practice French pretensions to predominance in the Lebanon. It is possible that with the blindfold support of the British and Russian Embassies some, but not all, of M. Bompard's recommendations might be carried; but if I am to withhold my support and to advocate the French proposals on their merits only, I believe that so much delay would be entailed as would be tantamount to preventing the French scheme from materialising until the election of the next governor five years hence—a result which is to be deplored not only in the interests of the Lebanon but also because it is calculated to create a feeling of soreness with M. Bompard.

It is a little difficult to avoid the impression that in this matter my French colleague has been endeavouring to "rush" matters. His motives would not be far to

seek. If his scheme were carried, the knowledge that the improved conditions in the Lebanon were due to French initiative would considerably enhance French prestige and influence locally, while the power which, under that scheme, the Lebanon administration would acquire to raise a revenue adequate to develop its natural resources would open a sure if small field for French enterprise, and will more than ever earmark the Syrian provinces as a close French preserve. This impression, moreover, is somewhat confirmed by two other circumstances, viz., the suggestion for the appointment of a foreign officer, who would unquestionably be French, to organise the militia, and, secondly, by M. Bompard's ambiguous attitude as regards the new governor. He has avoided disclosing to me the name of his own nominee, but opposes the reappointment of Youssouf Pasha and the appointment of Ibrahim Soussa Bey, whose candidature has been mentioned to us by Assim Bey.

Mr. Cumberbatch has reported in favour of the reappointment of Youssouf Pasha in the absence of any other really suitable candidate, and has also stated that the appointment of Ebrahim Soussa would not be desirable, as he belongs to a Greek Catholic family of Lebanon origin. M. Bompard's opposition to Ibrahim Soussa Bey was based on similar reasons, but Ibrahim Bey would appear to have fairly good qualifications for the post, as he has had administrative experience as Vali of the Archipelago, where he left an excellent record.

I have endeavoured in the foregoing paragraphs to represent a sketch of the situation in regard to the Lebanon as it appears to me, and I venture to solicit your instructions as to what my general line of conduct should be.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 75.

"Projet de Protocole" for the Lebanon.

LES représentants des Puissances constatent avec regret qu'il n'a pas été tenu compte des observations inscrites par eux dans le protocole des 15 août, 1892, et suivants, et insistent de nouveau sur ce point.

Les représentants des Puissances, d'accord avec la Sublime Porte, reconnaissent d'ailleurs qu'il est urgent, dans l'intérêt du Liban, de mettre certaines stipulations du règlement de 1864 en harmonie avec le régime politique du reste de l'Empire et ont adopté les dispositions suivantes :—

1. Les membres du Medjliss administratif seront élus dans les arrondissements par les cheikhs des villages, auxquels seront adjoints, dans tous les villages comptant plus de 50 contribuables, un délégué par 100 contribuables. Ces délégués seront désignés de la même façon que le sont actuellement les électeurs du second degré chargés de désigner le membre du Medjliss dans le caïmacamat de Zahlé.

2. Pour les élections au Medjliss administratif, les habitants du mudiriet de Deir-el-Kamar, qui n'ont actuellement aucun représentant à ce conseil, voteront avec ceux du caïmacamat de Chouf. Ce caïmacamat nommera dorénavant, en plus du membre druse et du membre musulman actuels, un membre maronite.

3. Un membre du Medjliss administratif, une fois élu, ne pourra être suspendu et déféré aux tribunaux qu'après une décision conforme du Medjliss lui-même. S'il s'agit d'une infraction de droit commun, le membre en cause sera jugé par les tribunaux ordinaires du Liban; s'il s'agit d'un fait touchant à son élection ou à l'exercice de ses fonctions, il sera justiciable du Medjliss lui-même.

4. Le conseil administratif participera à l'établissement du budget de prévision des recettes et des dépenses. Ce budget devra être arrêté et approuvé par le gouverneur général trois mois au moins avant l'ouverture de l'exercice financier qu'il concerne. Il sera publié.

5. Le Gouvernement Impérial n'ayant pas rempli depuis 1878 l'obligation que lui impose l'article 15 du règlement de 1864 de pourvoir aux excédents de dépenses de la Montagne, et désirant en être déchargé pour l'avenir, les Puissances acquiescent à ce vœu et fixent ainsi le régime financier de la Montagne :

Le Gouverneur général est autorisé à lever, au cours du prochain terme de son mandat, les impôts actuellement perçus dans le Liban et montant environ à 14,000 bourses. Il devra pendant ce temps procéder à la réfection du cadastre du Liban et à un nouveau recensement de la population. Après quoi il soumettra à la Sublime Porte et aux Puissances, trois mois au moins avant l'expiration de son mandat, et après les

avoir fait approuver par le Medjliss administratif, ses propositions pour l'établissement définitif de l'impôt de la Montagne, soit que l'ensemble des revenus nécessaires soit fourni par l'impôt foncier et l'impôt personnel basé sur le nouveau cadastre et le nouveau recensement, soit qu'il estime devoir y joindre d'autres taxes. La Sublime Porte et les Puissances statueront sur ces propositions, et fixeront pour le terme suivant le montant de l'impôt qui sera perçu dans la Montagne ainsi que les bases sur lesquelles se fera la perception.

En échange de la remise de la dette contractée par le Gouvernement Impérial envers le Trésor libanais depuis 1878 jusqu'à ce jour, la Sublime Porte remettra au Liban l'administration des bureaux de poste et de télégraphes installés sur son territoire dont les revenus seront dorénavant encaissés par le Trésor libanais.

La Sublime Porte s'engage également à lever la défense faite en 1909 aux bâtiments de commerce à vapeur de fréquenter les villes du littoral libanais, et autorisera le Liban à établir à Chekka, Djounié, Gébayl et Patroun des bureaux de douane, où les taxes douanières seront perçues d'après le même taux et les mêmes règles que dans le reste de l'Empire, mais au profit du Trésor libanais; elle pourra déléguer dans chacun de ces bureaux un inspecteur chargé de s'assurer de la stricte application de ces taxes de façon à éviter toute possibilité d'introduction frauduleuse dans le vilayet de marchandises qui auraient évité la taxation en passant par ces points. Le Trésor Impérial continuera d'ailleurs à percevoir à son profit les droits de douane sur les marchandises destinées au Liban lorsqu'elles sont importées de Beyrouth.

6. L'organisation judiciaire étant rétablie comme il est indiqué au protocole de 1864, les tribunaux libanais jugeront en matière commerciale lorsque les parties en cause seront libanaises. Lorsqu'un ou plusieurs étrangers seront intéressés à une affaire de cette nature, le tribunal de commerce de Beyrouth continuera à être seul compétent, à moins que ces étrangers n'acceptent la juridiction du tribunal libanais. L'appel de ces jugements du tribunal de commerce de Beyrouth sera porté au Medjliss judiciaire supérieur du Liban.

Les tribunaux libanais ayant été institués pour que la justice soit rendue d'après les coutumes locales, les sentences du Medjliss judiciaire supérieur ne seront susceptibles en aucune manière de recours en cassation.

7. Des événements récents ayant démontré l'insuffisance de la milice libanaise actuelle, elle sera portée aussitôt que possible à un chiffre total de 1,200 hommes et réorganisée par un officier étranger, comme cela s'est fait pour la gendarmerie ottomane. Le mandat de cet officier sera de même durée que celui du Gouverneur général.

[19772] No. 76.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 155.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, May 9, 1912.

RHODES.

According to somewhat garbled account just received from Smyrna, 14,000 Italian troops landed at two points on island each 5 miles from town. This force intercepted Turkish garrison of 1,500 retreating to Psitor Monastery, 10 miles inland, where depôt had been formed, captured 200, cut off retreat of rest, and are expecting their capitulation any moment.

General has issued proclamation demanding surrender of arms and guaranteeing safety of population.

[19864] No. 77.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 10.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of enclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 11th April, 1912, relative to lighting and buoying in the Persian Gulf.

Copy has been sent to the Admiralty.

India Office, May 9, 1912.

Enclosure 1 in No. 77.

Naval Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, to the Government of India.

Bombay, March 21, 1912.

BE pleased to lay before his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council the accompanying copy of a letter, dated the 21st March, 1912, which I have addressed to the political resident in the Persian Gulf relative to three gas buoys which have been sent to the Persian Gulf.

Enclosure 2 in No. 77.

Naval Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, to Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox.

Sir, *Bombay, March* 21, 1912.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 440 of the 17th March, 1912 [*sic*], relative to the three gas buoys which have been sent to the Persian Gulf, I have the honour to acquaint you that I think that the outer buoy for Bahrein should be placed on the 18 feet patch now marked by a red buoy, and that the other should be placed in the position now occupied by the red conical buoy off Jadun, *i.e.*, with west minaret in line with west shoulder of Jebel Dukhan, and with Kalali eastern tower south 50 east.

2. There will be no difficulty in arranging for one of His Majesty's ships to place the buoys in their correct positions when they arrive, and to see them lit. The duty of watching them to see that they do not become extinguished should be arranged for by the political agent, and probably it will be necessary for him to hire and instruct some boatmen, who will attend to the lights periodically. Any assistance or instructions required in the first place will be given by His Majesty's ship that places and lights the buoys.

3. The harbour of Bahrein was surveyed in 1901–02, and the plan is considered quite good enough for existing conditions. The examination of the approaches to Bahrein had reference more particularly to the proposed light-houses, as the existing chart is rather old.

4. The better of the two buoys relieved by these light buoys should be moored in the position formerly occupied by the West Spit buoy, which was reported missing by the Royal Indian Mail Steamer "Lawrence" in 1911. The other buoy should be sent to Abadan by the first available opportunity of freight, and after repair and painting it should be retained as a spare buoy for replacement if required.

5. The light buoy at Bushire should be placed and lit by one of His Majesty's ships, after consulting the political resident in the Persian Gulf, as soon as it arrives.

6. I am sending copies of this letter to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Marine Department, and to the senior naval officer, Persian Gulf, with instructions to the latter to make the necessary arrangements in the course.

I have, &c.
EDMOND J. W. SLADE,
Rear-Admiral.

[19843] No. 78.

Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Foreign Office.—(*Received May* 10.)

3, *Salters' Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,*
May 9, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, on the subject of the transport of the Bagdad Railway material, and I will take an early opportunity of laying it before my board.

In the meantime I am to state that your summary correctly represents the facts, and that it is contemplated that the vessels shall run under the Turkish flag. Further, that the incorporation of our company or its service into the new arrangements has not formed a subject of conversation with the Bagdad Railway Company; still less has it formed a subject for consideration. The negotiations have been confined to

giving effect to article 9 of the Bagdad Railway concession, which empowers the Bagdad Railway Company to place steamers on the rivers of Mesopotamia for the carriage of railway material, and they have had nothing whatever to do with the status or service of this company.

I have, &c.
FRED. W. PARRY,
Acting Secretary.

[18545] No. 79.

Sir Edward Grey to Tewfik Pasha.

(Confidential.)

SIR E. GREY presents his compliments to the Turkish Ambassador, and, with reference to certain informal communications made by the Vali of Bussorah some months ago to a British firm in regard to dredging operations on the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab, has the honour to suggest to his Highness, for the consideration of the Ottoman Government, that it seems not only desirable politically that the *status quo* should not be disturbed during the pending negotiations between Great Britain and Turkey, but that, from the technical point of view, the dredging of the bar and channel of the Shatt-el-Arab is a complicated and delicate work which should be examined as a whole and cannot be attempted piecemeal without serious danger to the navigability of the river. Such a comprehensive examination had consequently, it would seem, better be deferred.

Foreign Office, May 10, 1912.

[16000] No. 80.

Memorandum communicated to Tewfik Pasha.

HIS Majesty's Government are giving their careful attention to the important proposals contained in the memorandum communicated by his Highness the Turkish Ambassador on the 15th April, and they trust to be in a position to continue the negotiations with the Turkish Government when detailed investigations have been completed by the departments concerned.

In the meantime, however, they are somewhat doubtful, from the terms of the Turkish memorandum, whether, leaving on one side for the moment the territorial questions involved, the Turkish Government are prepared to accept the basis of settlement proposed by His Majesty's Government in the following paragraph:—

"British trade relations with the sheikhs of Koweit have existed for upwards of two centuries and, inasmuch as the place has attracted merchants from all quarters by the equity of its rule and the freedom of its trade, (1) His Majesty's Government could not consent to any interference with the succession or with the internal administration, or any infringement of the complete autonomy of the sheikh; (2) on the other hand, they are prepared to recognise Turkish suzerainty over Koweit, and to recognise the sheikh as a Turkish kaimakam; (3) provided in other respects the *status quo* is guaranteed; (4) and the validity of certain agreements which the sheikh has concluded with the British Government is recognised; . . . (5) and provided finally the sheikh is admitted to the full and undisturbed enjoyment of any properties he may own or hereafter purchase on Turkish territory; (6) Koweit would thus form a sort of *enclave* within, and forming part of, the Ottoman Empire, but enjoying complete self-government under Turkish suzerainty."

His Majesty's Government would be glad to have an explicit reply with regard to each of the propositions enumerated above.

There is another question which has recently caused some concern to His Majesty's Government, viz., that of the frontier between Turkey and Persia in the region of Mohammerah. When His Majesty's Government addressed their memorandum of last July to the Turkish Government that question had been dormant for sixty years, and His Majesty's Government had no desire to raise it. But from the attitude of the Turkish frontier commissioners at Constantinople they are led to apprehend that

the Turkish Government may contemplate advancing claims which would inevitably re-act unfavourably upon the adjustment of the respective interests of Great Britain and Turkey in the region of the Persian Gulf, in view of the close relations existing between His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh of Mohammerah.

Foreign Office, May 10, 1912.

[18545] No. 81.

Foreign Office to Mr. Greenway.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 10, 1912.

WITH reference to your letter of the 19th ultimo, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to state that, in view of the fact that negotiations are still in progress with the Turkish Government for an adjustment of British and Turkish interests in the region of the Persian Gulf, he would be glad if any application which may have been made in regard to dredging the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab may be withdrawn pending a settlement of the questions at issue.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[20715] No. 82.

Memorandum by Mr. Parker on the Bagdad Railway.

IN our memorandum of last July to the Turkish Ambassador we stipulated that if the railway was ever prolonged from Bussorah to the Persian Gulf "it must be brought to Koweit under conditions to be settled by agreement between Great Britain and Turkey alone, and a clause to this effect must be embodied in a convention dealing with these matters."

Germany has, in her agreement renouncing her right to build the line between Bagdad and the Gulf, stipulated that the Bagdad Railway Company shall have a share in the surrendered portion of the line (Bagdad to the Gulf) equal to that of any other foreign country.

As matters stand, therefore, there are only two ways of keeping Germany out of the Bussorah–Koweit line, if it is built.

The first way is that Turkey should build the line entirely herself, which would be unacceptable to us; the second is that Turkey should buy Germany out of the Koweit branch.

The second alternative is preferable, and when we reply to Turkey it will probably be necessary to say that we cannot agree to any arrangement which does not provide for this. Germany may, as a keen bargainer, suggest that we should buy her out in return for some concession elsewhere. Our answer might be that this is a matter for Turkey to arrange with Germany, as the concession would be to her and not to us.

A. P.

Foreign Office, May 11, 1912.

[20422] No. 83.

Memorandum by Mr. Parker on Question of the Right of Navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab by British and Foreign Merchant Ships as far as Kurna.

KURNA (Korna, Koorna) is situated at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, and forms a point from which the stream, flowing in a southerly direction to the Persian Gulf, is known as the Shatt-el-Arab.

There are no treaty stipulations between this country and Turkey specially relating to the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab or of the Tigris and Euphrates.*

* The Law Officers reported on the 14th June, 1864, that the right to navigate the rivers of the Ottoman Empire under the British flag was not secured to British subjects by treaty. The question, however, was reviewed a few years ago by Mr. Brant, and in a memorandum, dated the 4th February, 1907 (Confidential No. 8852), he advanced the opinion that, under various treaties quoted by him, Great Britain can claim to be entitled to engage in the navigation of the internal waters of the Ottoman Empire generally for direct trade, and also for coasting trade

Navigation of the two rivers has been forbidden to foreign vessels; but certain strictly limited privileges were conceded in 1834 to the British Government and afterwards, in 1861, to Messrs. Lynch.

In 1874 an "incident" occurred in connection with the visit of Her Majesty's ship "Philomel" to Kurna. This matter was fully dealt with in a memorandum written in 1881 by Sir E. Hertslet, then librarian of the Foreign Office (Confidential 4802). From the statements of the British consul-general at Bagdad, referred to in the memorandum, it appears that it had been the practice to regard the Shatt-el-Arab as a free river as far as Kurna. In a despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople he wrote:—

"It has always been supposed that the Shatt-el-Arab is a free river. Foreign vessels of war have on former occasions visited Kurna without any objection being raised. Sea-going craft are in the habit of there taking in their cargoes of dates, and it would be inconvenient to trade to interfere with them doing so."

The Ambassador, however, stated, with reference to this view:—

"Of the right of the Porte to exclude ships of war from the waters of these rivers, there cannot, I imagine, be a doubt; and I have not supported the view taken by Colonel Herbert (consul-general at Bagdad), who alludes to the fact of sea-going merchant-vessels taking in their cargoes at Kurna."

In 1894 a question arose in regard to the import duty charged at Bussorah on the "Malamir," a vessel belonging to the Tigris and Euphrates Steam Navigation Company. The company stated in a letter dated the 8th March, 1894, that vessels of all nations were allowed to ply between the sea and Bussorah without payment of any duty whatever. In reference to this matter the consul at Bussorah was instructed to report whether the Shatt-el-Arab between Bussorah and Kurna was treated by the Ottoman authorities as a free river so far as the payment of duties was concerned, and in reply he made the following statement:—

"The river between Bussorah and Gurna (Kurna) is as regards the levy of custom duty considered a free river, the Turkish authorities now prohibiting ocean steamers from going higher up the river than Bussorah, though until some few years ago it was customary for ocean steamers to load and unload at Maghil* when more convenient." — Consul Beville (Bussorah), No. 4, Commercial, May 4, 1894.

In 1896 the Porte claimed the right to carry out a search for arms "à bord de tous les bâtiments naviguant sur ledit fleuve [Shatt-el-Arab] entre Fao et Bassora."

On the subject of this claim the British consul at Bussorah wrote to the vali as follows:—

"I would now state that I do not consider that officials of the Turkish Government are entitled to interfere with any foreign vessel proceeding up the Shatt-el-Arab until she places herself within exclusively Turkish jurisdiction either by touching at or communicating with the Turkish bank of the river, or by passing Kayan creek (about 3 miles above Mohammerah on the Persian bank) where, I understand, Persian territory ends and from which point consequently both banks of the river are in the possession of the Turkish Government." — Enclosure in Sir P. Currie, No. 168, March 2, 1896.

The consul's contention was approved by Sir P. Currie, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and both the Foreign Office and India Office concurred in this approval. — India Office, April 17, 1896.

In connection with the dispute instructions were issued, after consultation with the Admiralty and India Office, authorising Sir P. Currie to inform the Porte that "henceforward Her Majesty's Government will require that search shall be made either at Bussorah or Fao in the presence of a British consular officer." Some discussion ensued relative to the recognition of a British consular agent at Fao, and Sir P. Currie suggested that the demand for recognition should be withdrawn in consideration of a written statement from the Porte that ships would be allowed to proceed direct to Mohammerah and Bussorah without being stopped in the Shatt-el-Arab. The consul at Bussorah pointed out, in reference to this suggestion, that if the Porte thus admitted the right of unobstructed passage to British ships they could not consistently endeavour to stop other foreign vessels, including vessels under the Persian flag, and the Shatt-el-Arab would thus virtually become a free river from its mouth to the point of contact of the Persian and Turkish frontier above Mohammerah. — To Sir P. Currie, No. 116, April 25, 1896. — Sir P. Currie, No. 477, Telegraphic, December 3, 1896. — Enclosure in Sir P. Currie No. 1099, December 30, 1896.

* Four miles above Bussorah.

Sir P. Currie, No. 161, March 18, 1897.

It was subsequently decided to make representations in the first place to the Vali of Bussorah, and, as a result, instructions were issued by him to the Turkish admiral to the effect that British vessels passing Fao should only be inspected at Bussorah.

Sir P Currie, No. 483, July 21, 1897.

Sir P. Currie, No. 408, June 21, 1897.

In the course of an interview in 1897 between the British consul at Bussorah and Vice-Admiral Emin Pasha, Vali of Bagdad, the latter frankly admitted that Bussorah was a free port.

Paragraph 4 of additional article 16 of a proposed Anglo-Turkish commercial treaty, which article was signed *ad referendum* on the 8th March, 1891, contained the following words:—

"Le port de la ville de Bassora sera, comme le passé, toujours ouvert à la navigation anglaise."

The claim to the right of free navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab by merchant ships as far as Bussorah is well supported by long practice, recognised by the Ottoman authorities.

Messrs. Lynch state that navigation is free as far as Kurna, but it will be seen from this memorandum that the right of free navigation to that place was questioned in 1874, and that as far back as 1894 ocean steamers were not permitted by the Ottoman authorities to proceed up the Shatt-el-Arab higher than Bussorah.

EDWARD PARKES.

Foreign Office, May 11, 1912.

[20119] No. 84.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 394.)

Sir, *Constantinople, May* 6, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch No. 122 of the 27th March last on the subject of the insurance claims against the Western Assurance Company arising out of the disorders at Adana in 1909, in which you were so good as to ask, firstly, whether in my opinion a proposal to refer the meaning of the word "émeute" to a tribunal of three neutral jurists would have any chance of acceptance by the Turkish Government; and, secondly, whether any other Powers had yet obtained compensation from the Ottoman Government for the loss of their nationals in connection with these disorders.

I have asked Mr. Waugh, the legal dragoman of the embassy, and Mr. Ryan, who has given his particular and very competent attention to this question, for their observations on these points, and I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the the memoranda with which they have furnished me.

As regards the first point, viz., the reference to a tribunal of neutral jurists for an interpretation of the expression "émeute," both gentlemen express themselves favourably, and think that although it would be inadvisable to urge that course on the Porte at present, the proposal might perhaps be brought forward with advantage at a suitable stage of a fresh suit against the company. Mr. Ryan, however, points out, as I think with good reason, that it would be imprudent in urging acceptance on the Porte to employ the arguments suggested in your despatch under reply, that there is no appeal in mixed cases before the Tidjaret court. I must confess that I am far from being sanguine of inducing the Porte to agree to such reference.

As to the liability of the Turkish Government to compensate foreigners for losses suffered in consequence of the disorders, Mr. Waugh calls attention to the existence of a discrepancy between the sentence of the Tidjaret court in the case of the Western Assurance Company, and the theory of non-liability enunciated in the Porte's note to the French Embassy on this question, and he suggests that this contradiction might be utilised if a case can be made out for holding the Porte responsible for damages. Both he and Mr. Ryan demur strongly to the opinion expressed in your despatch that the Western Assurance Company is debarred from claiming compensation from the Turkish Government by the fact that the property insured was native property, and that, therefore, the company cannot claim to be in a better position than the persons

they insure. They consider, on the contrary, that the company's claim in respect of the sums paid by them to their insured, is entitled to the same treatment as the claim of any other British subject for loss or damage to property.

The prospect of inducing the Porte to admit liability for losses suffered by British subjects appears to me to be exceedingly remote, nor do I see how after so long an interval we could with propriety prefer such a claim. The other embassies, as you are aware, did put forward claims for compensation, and the Sublime Porte met their demands with a point-blank refusal. None of the missions have, however, made any real effort to insist on their claims, and although they do not admit that they have conceded the point of principle, they are in practice allowing the question to drop.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 84.

Memorandum by Mr. Waugh.

FOREIGN OFFICE despatch No. 122 of the 27th March, 1912.

I have seen Mr. Bentley, representative, and Mr. Leete, Constantinople agent, of the Western Assurance Company, with reference to further claims which may be made against the company in respect of fires which occurred at Adana during the massacre there. They are unable to state what risks they took there upon the French form of policy, as both French and English forms were used, and no record was kept to show which form of policy was issued in each case. They anticipate, however, that other actions will be brought upon the French form. It is worth noting that in a similar action now pending against the French Union de Paris the new defence has been set up that the word "complot" in the policy bars the action. The French company seeks to establish the existence of a "complot" at Adana by the fact that the court-martial convicted and sentenced for the riot persons who were not at Adana at the time. It will be interesting to see how the court deals with this plea.

The suggestion made by the Foreign Office of referring to three neutral jurists the interpretation of the word "émeute" seems to me good, in the event of the French Government maintaining its uncompromising attitude towards the court, and of further actions brought against the Western turning upon the same point. I think it might then be urged upon the Sublime Porte that two precisely similar actions tried in the same court, upon the same facts, had terminated in two contradictory results. In the English case, the court, sitting with British assessors, had given judgment rejecting the plea that "émeute" existed at Adana, and the company had paid; in the French case the French Government had intervened to veto such a decision. This intervention of the French Government, in a case which turned entirely upon the interpretation of a French word, justified His Majesty's Government in demanding the reference to arbitration of the point at issue, *i.e.*, the definition of the word "émeute."

I annex copy of the memorandum presented by me to the court, based upon certain French leading cases invoked by the company.

These cases go to show that the clause of a policy excluding the risk of fire during a time of "émeute" or "mouvement populaire" is applicable when a strike has degenerated into one or the other, but there seems a certain undefined distinction between the two terms. I endeavoured to show that the French courts treat "émeute" as an intensified "mouvement populaire," but the Turkish court did not take this view, and the point seems, under the peculiar circumstances, one which calls for authoritative decision.

With regard to the further question treated in the Foreign Office despatch, of compensation by the Turkish Government for damages suffered by British subjects at Adana, it appears to me that the decision of the Tidjaret court may strengthen the case against the Turkish Government.

The translation of the decision is as follows:—

". . . . . and seeing that in the regrettable events which took place at Adana there was no movement against the Government; and seeing that, although the attack by one section of the population upon another may be included in the expression "mouvement populaire," yet in the Adana events no movement was apparent as having taken place against the established power, the company's plea on this head is rejected, &c."

In face of this decision it seems difficult for the Turkish Government to maintain that it is not responsible for damage caused to foreign subjects. Westlake, "International Law, Part 1, Peace": Cambridge, 1904, p. 315, says:—

"The grounds on which money compensation to the families of the murdered Italians (at New Orleans in 1891), and satisfaction to their Government for the outrage by the punishment of the criminals, were due in the instance just cited, were, that good-will and due diligence on the part of the local authorities would have prevented the occurrence . . . . . but such grounds are often wanting when foreigners suffer in the course of disturbances beyond mere riots. During an insurrection the best will on the part of the State Government, backed by the best laws, is often unable to prevent or to punish regrettable occurrences."

Westlake seems to lay down that compensation may be demanded in case of riot which could not be claimed in case of insurrection.

This theory contradicts that laid down by the Sublime Porte in its *note verbale* to the French Embassy (copy annexed), in which it rejects the French claim for compensation on the ground that "d'après les principes du droit international, les Gouvernements ne sont pas tenus responsables des troubles survenus dans leurs États."

If a case can be made out for compensation to British subjects generally, it seems to me that the Western Assurance Company would be entitled to recover the amount paid on its policies (but not law expenses).

A. T. WAUGH.

Constantinople, April 20, 1912.

Enclosure 2 in No. 84.

Memorandum presented by Mr. Waugh to the Tidjaret Court during the deliberation in the action Gasparian v. Western Assurance Company.

DEPUIS la dernière séance j'ai étudié avec grand soin les plaidoiries des deux côtés, et je demande la permission du tribunal de lui soumettre quelques observations.

Pour le moment la seule question posée au tribunal est le sens exacte du mot français "émeute."

Le demandeur prétend que les événements d'Adana ne peuvent pas être qualifiés d'émeute; et il justifie cette prétention par une définition du mot d'après laquelle il faut pour constituer l'émeute qu'il existe un élément de révolte contre l'autorité civile; ce qui, d'après lui, manquait à Adana. Le défendeur conteste cette thèse et il cite des décisions des tribunaux français.

Or, lorsque le tribunal est appelé à statuer sur l'interprétation à donner à un mot français, il ne pourra mieux faire que d'étudier les décisions rendues à ce sujet par les tribunaux en France.

La décision du tribunal civil de Narbonne en date du 20 mars, 1907, citée par le défendeur paraît trancher la question:—

"Attendu que la compagnie 'Le Soleil' se refuse au paiement de toute indemnité, invoquant l'article 2 de la police ainsi conçu: 'En cas de guerre, d'insurrection, d'émeute ou de mouvement populaire quelconque . . . . . la compagnie n'est responsable de l'incendie . . . . .';

"Attendu, d'ailleurs, que ces restrictions à la responsabilité de l'assureur pour le cas de guerre, émeute ou occupation militaire se retrouvant dans la plupart des traités d'assurance, et que l'on ne peut étendre à ces événements la garantie qu'en cas de stipulations spéciales et formelles;

"Attendu que le seul point à examiner, c'est de savoir si les événements qui se déroulaient à Fleury, à l'époque du sinistre, rentrent dans l'énumération portée à l'article 2 et notamment s'il existait alors un mouvement populaire quelconque;

"Attendu qu'on ne saurait appliquer cette qualification au fait de grève en lui-même, qui peut n'être que l'exercice d'un droit; mais que les violences, troubles, agitations populaires qui parfois accompagnent les revendications les plus légitimes rentrent évidemment dans les prévisions des parties qui stipulent une assurance, que la grève seule ne suspend en rien le droit de l'assuré, mais que l'émeute dont elle est le prétexte change aussitôt le caractère des risques;

"Attendu que l'assureur est tenu de faire la preuve du mouvement populaire qu'il invoque; mais que, d'après le paragraphe 1er de l'article 2, l'assuré doit, s'il veut être payé, prouver que l'incendie ne parvient ni directement, ni indirectement, des causes violentes qui sont alléguées, émeutes ou mouvements populaires;

"Attendu que, par mouvement populaire, il faut entendre, quand il n'y a pas, à proprement parler, émeute ou soulèvement violent, un état d'excitation des esprits dans une masse de citoyens, donnant lieu à des démonstrations extérieures et accompagnées d'agitations sur la voie publique;

"Attendu que les perturbations qui se sont produites à Fleury à la fin de l'année 1905, nécessitèrent la présence d'une compagnie du 100e d'infanterie, d'un escadron de chasseurs et de nombreux gendarmes, et que cette occupation a duré plusieurs mois;

"Attendu que cette occupation militaire, dans une commune rurale, suffit à elle seule à démontrer le 'mouvement populaire' tel qu'il est prévu au contrat;

"Attendu, il est vrai, que les locaux incendiés n'avaient pas été occupés par la troupe (ce qui aurait rendu applicable la déchéance de l'article 2 même en temps de paix, et sans émeute ou agitation populaire);

"Mais attendu que les sentiments d'hostilité déjà manifestés contre M. B. . . . . et l'ensemble des circonstances qui accompagnèrent l'incendie, portèrent l'opinion publique et B. . . . lui-même, à attribuer le sinistre à la malveillance;

"Attendu que ce sentiment a été nettement exprimé par l'assuré, dans sa déclaration d'incendie, du 24 novembre, 1905, devant le juge de paix; qu'à ce moment déjà, on voyait un lien entre l'incendie et les troubles qui régnaient à Fleury, à propos de la grève agricole; que cela semble se dégager d'ailleurs de documents administratifs et judiciaires . . . . ."

* * * * *

Il est à remarquer que dans ce jugement le tribunal français emploie les expressions "émeute" et "mouvement populaire" indistinctement, et paraît donner au mot émeute le sens d'un mouvement populaire porté jusqu'à la violence. Le tribunal français n'affirme nullement l'interprétation restreinte que le demandeur actuel cherche à faire donner à ce mot.

Or, ce qui est vrai pour un cas de grève doit également être vrai pour le mouvement d'hostilité d'une section de la population contre l'autre qui causa les massacres d'Adana.

La dépêche officielle du Vali d'Adana lue à la Chambre des Députés et publiée dans la "Gazette officielle" du 23 avril (v.s.), 1909, pp. 4 et 5 et 13, relate les efforts faits par les autorités avec le concours de la force militaire pour supprimer le mouvement.

Il semble impossible de soutenir en présence des faits connus des événements d'Adana qu'il n'y existait d'émeute.

Même l'origine étymologique du mot ("émouvoir," "émotion," "émeute") paraît réfuter l'interprétation forcée que veut lui attribuer le demandeur.

Enclosure 3 in No. 84.

Note verbale communicated to French Embassy at Constantinople by Sublime Porte.

LE Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères a l'honneur de recevoir la note verbale que l'Ambassade de France a bien voulu lui adresser, le 22 octobre dernier, relativement aux pertes que des citoyens français auraient subies lors des troubles survenus dernièrement dans les vilayets d'Adana et Alep.

Le Ministère Impérial croit devoir faire observer tout d'abord que, d'après les principes du droit international, les Gouvernements ne sont pas tenus responsables des troubles survenus dans leurs États et que la réparation des préjudices causés incombe en pareil cas aux fauteurs.

Il a l'honneur d'ajouter que lesdits troubles n'ont point surgi par la faute du Gouvernement, qui, quoique occupé par des événements bien plus graves survenus dans la capitale même, n'a pas manqué de prendre, dans les limites du possible et autant que les circonstances le permettaient, les mesures propres à les faire cesser.

Il va sans dire que les pertes occasionnées dans le vilayet ne sont pas de nature à favoriser les intérêts économiques de l'État même, qui avait pour première préoccupation de mettre sans retard un terme aux actes répréhensibles commis.

Cependant, si le cas de force majeure peut être invoqué pour n'avoir pas pu enrayer de suite le mouvement sur les lieux, ce même cas de force majeure peut être encore davantage par le Gouvernement central, par le fait qu'il lui a été matériellement impossible d'agir avec toute la célérité voulue.

Du reste, le Gouvernement Impérial, dans les ordres catégoriques qu'il a transmis au vilayet d'Adana, n'a pas manqué de mentionner les étrangers d'une façon toute spéciale. S'ils ont été lésés, ce n'est pas faute de vigilance, mais bien parce qu'il n'y avait pas moyen de faire cesser toute violence à leur égard, parce qu'il y avait cas de force majeure.

Le Ministère Impérial estime inutile de relever que les fonctionnaires de la localité n'ont pas intentionnellement porté atteinte aux droits des étrangers ou qu'ils n'ont point agi par incurie, vu qu'en faisant preuve de la plus grande activité ils n'auraient pas pu obtenir de meilleurs résultats.

D'ailleurs, des faits regrettables analogues se sont produits en d'autres pays et toute demande d'indemnité a été déclinée par le Gouvernement territorial, qui a invité les victimes à attaquer devant les tribunaux des fauteurs ou auteurs de désordres, et les États dont elles relevaient ont jugé cette réponse juridiquement suffisante.

Le Ministère Impérial aime à espérer que l'ambassade de la république voudra bien se convaincre de la justesse du point de vue de la Sublime Porte et inviter ses ressortissants intéressés à actionner ceux qui leur auraient occasionné les pertes et dont ils se plaignent.

Enclosure 4 in No. 84.

Memorandum by Mr. Ryan.

FOREIGN OFFICE despatch No. 122 of the 27th March, 1912, and Mr. Waugh's remarks thereon.

The Foreign Office despatch raises two questions, namely:—

1. What, if any, action should be taken in view of the company's continued dissatisfaction with the result of the action in the mixed court? and

2. What, if any, action should be taken to cause the Turkish Government to indemnify the company for losses arising out of the disturbances at Adana and judicial decisions given in actions consequent on those disturbances?

1. The Foreign Office suggests that the Porte should be asked to refer the question whether there was or was not an "émeute" to three neutral jurists without awaiting the institution of further actions against the company. I think it very unlikely that the Porte would agree to such a reference for the determination of what is at the present moment, as the Foreign Office says, a mere abstract question. The suggestion would have more chance of acceptance if it were put forward in order to escape from a deadlock in any fresh case brought against the company on any of their French policies. The attitude of the French Embassy and the more favourable position in which the French insurance company is placed as a result of it might well be considered to justify us in creating such a deadlock by insisting on some independent elucidation of the word "émeute" whenever such new case began to turn on that point. The question whether the suggestion for a reference to three neutral jurists should then be put forward in the court or diplomatically would have to be decided in the light of future circumstances. In any case, I think it would be wise to base the suggestion solely on the contradictory results of the previous French and English cases, and not on the fact that the decisions of the mixed court are not subject to appeal, as it would not, I think, be in accordance with our more general interests to suggest that the absence of an appeal is a defect in the present system for deciding mixed cases. The mixed court is a very abnormal institution, and to suggest that its constitution is defective might open the way prematurely to suggestions which it is not our interest to provoke.

In saying that the Foreign Office suggestion would have more chance of acceptance if made on the occasion of a deadlock in a concrete case, I do not wish to imply that even then the chance of acceptance would be great. It must be borne in mind that the Porte would probably not admit any legal contradiction in the results of the previous French and English cases, for they would probably say that in both cases the majority of the court took the same view of the meaning of the word "émeute,"

and that the action of the French Embassy could not invalidate the legal force of this decision in the French case, though it might prevent effect being given to it.

2. In the three cases against the British company already taken into the mixed court, the company has sustained a definite loss, because, without awaiting a final judgment, they decided to compromise the cases by making certain payments as soon as the "émeute" point was decided against them. It is not impossible that any further cases may have a similar result, *e.g.*, if the three neutral jurists took the same view as the Turkish members of the mixed court. The question thus arises whether the Turkish Government can be held liable for losses sustained by the company under those circumstances. My personal opinion is that the company's claim would be in precisely the same position as that of British subjects whose property was destroyed in consequence of the disturbances. I confess that I cannot see the force of the argument that His Majesty's Government could not claim on behalf of insurers because they could not have claimed on behalf of the natives insured. In the case of the latter, the consideration which would debar His Majesty's Government from making a claim would not be the inherent badness of the claim, but the fact of the claimants not being British subjects. If, then, the company, who are British subjects, have suffered a definite loss owing to their being compelled to make good damage occasioned by the disturbances, it seems to me clear that *vis-à-vis* the Turkish Government they are entitled to the same measure of protection as other British subjects whose property was destroyed.

Assuming for the moment that the view just stated be granted, it remains to consider what is the position of British subjects generally, whose property was damaged or destroyed in the Adana disturbances. The present despatch from the Foreign Office states, or at least implies, that the proposal to claim indemnities from the Turkish Government on behalf of such persons was definitely rejected. As a matter of fact, however, the Foreign Office has never gone further than the instructions contained in its despatch No. 351 of the 12th November, 1909 (confirmed by No. 378 of the 11th December, 1909), which were as follows:—

"It would be inadvisable to submit a list of claims to the Porte for the present. You should therefore take no further action in the matter, unless you learn that similar claims put forward on behalf of the subjects of other Powers have been favourably received."

These instructions can hardly be taken as a definite decision to admit the Turkish Government's pretension of non-liability. Perhaps, therefore, it may now be considered advisable to take a final decision on this subject. The Turkish Government, which denied its liability in replying to representations made by the embassies of the United States of America and all the Great Powers except ourselves in 1909, has not since then modified its attitude. My personal view is that under these circumstances we could not very decently put forward a list of claims now, so long after the event; and that if put forward it would have very little chance of being accepted, unless very strongly pressed, or unless the idea of an arbitration on all the claims of all the foreigners concerned were revived. The point made by Mr. Waugh is indeed worthy of consideration, namely, that now that a Turkish court has decided that the Adana disturbances were not of an insurrectionary character, the Turkish Government can be the more easily held liable for damage to foreign property. I fear, however, that the Turks would not admit this. They would probably say, and with some reason, that even in the case of disturbances not in the nature of insurrection, it may be impossible for a Government, with all the good-will and diligence in the world, to exert its authority so immediately as to prevent damage to private property, and that damage caused in the necessary interval is as much due to *force majeure* as any damage caused during an insurrection. It might be difficult to combat this argument, unless we are prepared to contend that the authorities were guilty of a deliberate failure to protect foreigners.

The views which I have stated at some length may be summarised as follows:—

1. That the suggestion to ask the Porte to have the word "émeute" elucidated by three jurists could not with advantage be put forward at the present time, but might be put forward at a suitable stage of any fresh case against the company;

2. That, if the suggestion be eventually put forward, it would be well to avoid any mention of the absence of an appeal in mixed cases;

3. That the company's claim against the Turkish Government in respect of sums paid by them to their insured is entitled to the same treatment as the claims of British subjects whose property was damaged or destroyed;

4. That, notwithstanding the decision of the mixed court concerning the nature of the Adana disturbances, it is very doubtful whether the claims of any British subjects against the Government could now be put forward with propriety; and,

5. That such claims, if put forward, would have little chance of being admitted unless very strongly supported, or unless all the missions united to urge the Porte to submit the whole question of foreign claims to arbitration.

ANDREW RYAN.

May 2, 1912.

[20121] No. 85.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 396.)

Sir, *Constantinople, May* 8, 1912.

In reply to your despatch No. 159 of the 24th ultimo on the subject of Messrs. Lynch's barges on the Tigris, I have the honour to submit that I see nothing in Messrs. Lynch's letter to induce me to modify the opinion I have already expressed as to the interpretation to be placed on the permission given by the Porte for an extra barge to be employed for the working off of accumulated cargo at Bussorah. There is, of course, reason to question the company's good faith in the matter, but the Porte would, I feel convinced, conceive a very unfavourable impression of the embassy's intentions if it now sought to enforce on the Ottoman Government the company's interpretation. The Porte will undoubtedly be less disposed to accept the company's explanation than the embassy is, and I am of the opinion that the better course would be, if the congestion is really serious, to start afresh and ask for a new permission. It is, however, desirable that such application should be deferred as long as possible, and that, when made, it should be for a definite period of weeks, which the company might be asked to estimate.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[20122] No. 86.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 397.)

Sir, *Constantinople, May* 8, 1912.

IN reply to your despatch No. 161 of the 25th ultimo, forwarding copy of a letter from the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company asking that instructions may be sent to the Vali of Bussorah to permit the substitution of one of their reserve vessels for one of the three now running whenever this may be necessary, I have the honour to state that it would in my opinion be unwise and probably useless at the present time to ask for anything in the nature of general instructions from the Central Government to the Vali of Bussorah.

A good precedent was established by this embassy last year for the recognition of the company's right to substitute a reserve steamer for any one of the three normally running steamers which may be incapacitated. The question of using the "Bulbul" was, as far as could be gathered from the telegrams received here from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, rather different, and it need not therefore invalidate the precedent of last year, which can be invoked by Mr. Crow whenever the same necessity for replacing one of the steamers by a reserve steamer arises.

It appears to me that the company's best course would be to instruct their agent at Bussorah to inform Mr. Crow a reasonable time beforehand when they contemplate docking the "Mejidieh," so that, if Mr. Crow finds the local authorities are disposed to question the company's right to substitute the reserve steamer for that vessel, he can telegraph to the embassy, and the necessary action can then be taken at the Porte.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[20124] No. 87.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 399.)

Sir, *Constantinople, May* 8, 1912.

THE news which has reached here regarding the occupation of Rhodes is very scanty owing to the cutting of all the cables by the Italians and their interference with the Turkish heliographic means of correspondence.

According to the Turkish version, the garrison of the whole island consists of some 1,200 men, who are expected to give a good account of themselves. The governor of the town of Rhodes followed his instructions to surrender at once when called upon to do so, in order to avoid unnecessary loss of life among the civilian population.

This recent step on the part of Italy has been received with the greatest calm here, and the further occupation of the islands in that part of the Ægean is likewise anticipated with serenity. This may be accounted for to some extent by the fact that these islands are for the most part inhabited by Greeks, and the Turks regard with their usual equanimity the inevitable loss of customs receipts. It is admitted that the populations of the occupied islands will necessarily suffer, but it is argued that the blow will be much more severe to Hellenic merchants doing business with those islands than to the Turks themselves. Moreover, the occupation of these islands, if there is any intention of such becoming permanent, would be a severe blow to Greek ambitions, and would produce the inevitable result of uniting Turks and Greeks against Italy as a common enemy.

Turkish public opinion finds some comfort in the thought that the occupation of the islands will be viewed with displeasure by the Mediterranean Powers who desire to maintain the equilibrium on that sea, and it cannot but be distasteful to Great Britain and France, although the Powers cannot fail to argue that it amounts to a check imposed by them on Italy after the recent incident at the Dardanelles.

On one point public opinion appears to be very decided, namely, that this action on the part of Italy can have no real effect on the war, which must be fought out in Tripoli itself.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[20206] No. 88.

Sir C. Greene to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 30.)

Sir, *Copenhagen, May* 8, 1912.

WITH reference to your despatches Nos. 4 and 7 of the 3rd and 10th ultimo respectively, on the subject of Mr. Barclay Raunkiaer's journey of exploration in Eastern Arabia, I have the honour to report that according to to-day's newspapers a telegram has been received from that gentleman, dated Muscat, yesterday, in which he informs the committee of the Royal Danish Geographical Society that he has travelled through Central Arabia, and that, although he had had to contend with great difficulties and even dangers, yet his journey had been successful both in respect of the route explored and of the results achieved. According to the information now published, Mr. Raunkiaer, who left here on the 12th November last, travelled viâ Constantinople and Asia Minor to Aleppo, whence he proceeded by carriage to Bagdad and Bussorah. With the assistance of the Vali of Bussorah he continued his journey viâ Zobeir to Koweit, where he was the guest of the Sheikh Mobarek. At Koweit he drew up the route of his great journey of exploration, which was to cross the desert by way of the Oasis of Berrida and Riad through the heart of Central Arabia in the Wahabite country, and thence eastward by the Oasis of Hofûf to the coast. Mr. Raunkiaer is now on his way to Bombay, *en route* back to Copenhagen, where he expects to arrive next month. In the autumn the results of his expedition, which include the mapping of a considerable extent of hitherto unexplored country and the study of the inhabitants, the fauna, and flora of the districts traversed, will be published by the Royal Geographical Society.

I have, &c.
CONYNGHAM GREENE.

[20419] No. 89.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 158.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 12, 1912.*

FOLLOWING from consular officer, Smyrna, telegram No. 27 :—

"Following is a summary of despatches received from vice-consul at Rhodes :—

"Italian forces from 8,000 to 10,000 of all arms, including gendarmes with several batteries of mountain guns, from 200 to 300 horse, and 1,000 mules, and enormous supplies of provisions and fodder.

"Part of troops from Italy, part from Tobruk.

"Squadron consists of eleven cruisers, twenty destroyers [? and] torpedo-boats, and nine transports.

"[Two groups undecyphernble] 4th May more than 4,000 with artillery and mounted gendarmes landed 10 miles from Rhodes on the east coast.

"Part of them cut off the retreat of the Turks to the mountains, and the remainder marched to Rhodes.

"Bluejackets landed, and with troops occupied Government House and the principal places.

"Italian flag hoisted and saluted. Proclamation issued.

"Turkish forces 1,500 regulars and 500 reserves, and volunteers have little food. Many have deserted, and the remainder are expected to surrender.

"One hundred and five prisoners of war and the leading members of the committee captured and sent to Italy.

"Vali with his staff tried to escape in a sailing-vessel but was captured.

"Up to 8th May there had been no bombardment nor loss of life worth mention.

[20265] No. 90.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 64.)
(Telegraphic.) *Decode.* *Rome, May 13, 1912.*

ADMIRAL VIALI has reported Italian flag hoisted in islands Scarpanto and Caxo. Garrisons and civil authorities of these, as well as of Episkopi and Nisyros, will be sent as prisoners of war to Italy.

[20489] No. 91.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 14.)

(No. 67.)
Sir, *Athens, May 8, 1912.*

THE following is a summary of some of the comments of the Greek press called forth by the Italian occupation of the islands of Astypalaia and Rhodes, and the expectation that others will share their fate :—

The "Chronos" asks what is to become of the islands occupied by the Italians when the war comes to an end. Will the Italians, who are fighting to free the Arabs from Turkish barbarism, and the Powers, who approve this civilising action, consent to the Greeks of the islands being replaced under the Turkish yoke? It would be an insult to civilisation.

The "Patris" says that Greece is not annoyed at the temporary occupation of the islands by Italy, but she cannot remain indifferent to the dangers threatening the Greek inhabitants. It is inconceivable that the Italians on leaving the islands will hand them back to the Turks. The honour and moral obligations of Italy demand that when they evacuate the islands they shall not allow them to return under the Crescent, but that a different political existence shall be assured to them.

The "Kairoi" expresses astonishment at the report that the islands occupied by Italy will be returned to Turkey after the war. This would be a violation of the doctrine that no territory inhabited by Christians which is once liberated can be put back under the Turkish yoke, and would be a most unjust and barbarous act. The population is already exposed to all kinds of outrages at the hands of the fanatical

Turks on the mere appearance of Christian ships, but what would happen if the islands once occupied were to be put back under the Crescent would be far worse. It is incredible that Italy should think of so besmirching her good name, or that she is making any promises in that respect, for so long as Turkey knows that she will get the islands back she will be in no hurry to conclude peace. The only way of putting real pressure on Turkey is to convince her that the pieces of her territory which are once occupied are lost to her for ever. Greece therefore hails with enthusiasm the occupation of the islands by the Italians, for the Turkish yoke is thus definitely broken, and in any case the negotiations after the war will secure autonomy for them. There can be no question of the continuance of the Italian occupation.

Leading Greeks express to me great apprehensions as to the fate of the islanders after the war is over. If the Italian occupation is prolonged, they say, such Mussulman inhabitants as there are will be sure to emigrate, selling their possessions cheap; and, if the islands are eventually restored to Turkey, they will return, and claims and recriminations, and reprisals against the Christians, are certain. My Italian colleague tells me confidentially that he believes the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs intends to make unofficial representations to him upon this subject.

I have, &c.
F. ELLIOT.

[20625] No. 92.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 14.)

(No. 65.)
(Telegraphic.) *Decode.* *Rome, May 14, 1912.*

IN addition to island reported as occupied in my telegram No. 64 of 13th May, it is announced officially that Turkish garrison and civil authorities have been removed by Italian squadron in Ægean from Kalimnos, Leros, and Patmos.

[20863] No. 93.

Joint Letter addressed to Sir E. Grey.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 15, 1912.*

WE have the honour to submit the draft of an Anglo-Turkish Convention for the future conservancy of the Shatt-el-Arab.

In view of the history and wording of article 2 of the Treaty of Erzeroum (1847), we consider that the Turkish claim to the ownership of the whole waterway is so strong that it cannot successfully be disputed, especially before The Hague Tribunal; we are further of opinion that no practical advantage would be secured by Persian representation.

The draft is accordingly based on the assumption that the proposed riverain commission will be nominally Turkish and not international. But while investing the commission with a Turkish *façade*, we have sought to further the general interests of navigation by placing the police control and supervision of the technical work in the hands of a commission which is independent of the local authorities, and only responsible to the Central Government, and thereby to ensure that the administration of the river shall be impartial and effective. We have also, by the wording of article 16 of the convention, sought to protect the property of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company on the left bank of the river.

As the quarantine arrangements at Bussorah are at present under the control of the Board of Health at Constantinople, it has not appeared advisable, or indeed possible, to give the riverain commission any control of quarantine in the Shatt-el-Arab.

As regards the levy of dues, it is not impossible that it may be objected to by other Powers as an infringement of their rights under the Capitulations, and neither the commission nor the Turkish Government has the power to enforce payment. But in so far as such dues will be in respect of pilotage and wharf accommodation, they will be levied in return for services which can be withheld if they are not paid, and any difficulty might be avoided, or at least mitigated, by a consolidated due which could be pitched sufficiently high to cover all costs, but in which the various items were not differentiated.

Under article 23 of the convention of March 1903, the Bagdad Railway Company hold certain rights in regard to the port of Bussorah, which have devolved under the agreement of 1911 upon the proposed new Turkish company. These are provided for in clause 6 (*e*) of the draft convention, and the relations of the riverain commission to this company will be a matter for negotiation when the company is formed.

By handing over to the commission as proposed in article 6 (*g*) the lights and buoys in the approaches to the river His Majesty's Government will be saved the cost of their maintenance, which will be a substantial sum.

We have added at the conclusion of the draft convention an article specifying twenty years as the period of its duration. We have thought that this would be better than attempting to render the convention permanent or indefinite in its duration. It will be impossible for the commission to carry out any substantial works for the improvement of the river unless it is certain to last for a reasonably long period, and, on the other hand, if a definite period of years is specified as the duration of the convention, it will be easier to withstand attempts on the part of the Sublime Porte to reopen the whole matter and negotiate a new convention.

We think it may be found desirable that the period for which the increased customs are to be levied should be limited to the same number of years.

We have, &c.

EDMOND J. W. SLADE.
A. HIRTZEL.
C. J. B. HURST.
ALWYN PARKER.

Enclosure in No. 93.

Draft Convention for the Establishment of a Shatt-el-Arab Navigation Commission.

THE Government of His Britannic Majesty and the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan of Turkey, being desirous on account of the magnitude of their interests in the trade on the Shatt-el-Arab to improve the navigation of that river, and to diminish the risks to which commerce thereon is exposed, have agreed as follows:—

1. The navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab shall be open to the ships of all nations.

2. The Imperial Ottoman Government will establish a Commission in which shall be vested the control of the Shatt-el-Arab from Kurna to the sea.

3. The Commission shall consist of two members only, to be appointed by the Imperial Ottoman Government. One of these two members shall be of British nationality, and shall be selected from candidates suggested by the Government of His Britannic Majesty.

4. Each of the Commissioners shall receive annually a salary of £ T. 2,000 free of all deductions. These salaries shall be paid out of the receipts of the Commission.

5. The Commission shall appoint such officers and employees as may be necessary, but the Chief Engineer shall be of British nationality. The salaries of such officers and employees shall be fixed and paid by the Commission.

6. The Commission shall be charged with the following duties:—

(*a.*) The execution of such works as may be necessary, and as the funds at its disposal will allow, for the improvement of the channel of the river and of the approaches thereto on the seaward side.

(*b.*) The provision of such wharfs, quays, docks, jetties, and other facilities as may be required for the traffic of the river.

(*c.*) The control, so far as may be necessary for carrying out the purposes of this convention, and subject to the treaty rights of foreign Powers, of the wharfs, quays, docks, and jetties in or on the banks of the river belonging to private persons.

(*d.*) The maintenance of the channel of the river free from obstructions of all sorts, so as to keep it in the best possible state for navigation.

(*e.*) The preparation, issue, and enforcement of regulations for the navigation of the river and for the policing of the river and the land and buildings held by the Commission.

(*f.*) The control of pilotage.

(*g.*) The buoying and lighting of the channel, and the maintenance and control of such lights and buoys in the approaches to the river as may be placed under the charge of the Commission.

7. The Imperial Ottoman Government undertakes to facilitate the acquisition by the Commission of such land as the Commission shall consider necessary to enable it to carry out effectually the duties assigned to it. The cost of such land shall be paid by the Commission.

In cases where land to which fishing rights are attached is acquired by the Commission, no unnecessary interference with such fishing rights shall take place.

8. In order to cover the expenses of the works undertaken and the services maintained by it, the Commission shall, subject to the principles laid down in article 9, levy upon all ships such dues as may be prescribed by it from time to time.

9. No dues or taxes shall be levied, either by the Porte or by the Commission, on ships or goods on the Shatt-el-Arab based on the mere fact of navigation. The dues levied by the Commission shall not exceed the amounts reasonably required for the works undertaken and the services maintained by it. These dues shall be levied impartially, and no differentiation shall be made between the ships or goods of different nations or persons.

10. Any sums which it may become necessary for the Commission to borrow for the purpose of carrying out the duties imposed upon it shall be advanced by the high contracting parties at a rate of interest not exceeding 5 per cent. per annum, in such proportions and upon such terms as to repayment as they may arrange.

11. The control of all funds raised and expended by the Commission shall be vested exclusively in the Commission.

12. The Commission shall publish annually complete and accurate accounts, showing the amounts received and expended by it.

13. If the receipts of the Commission are insufficient to cover its expenditure the deficit shall be made good by the Imperial Ottoman Government.

14. In the event of the members of the Commission being unable to agree as to whether any particular works are or are not necessary for the improvement of the Shatt-el-Arab, or as to the way in which particular works should be carried out, the question shall be referred by them to an engineer of repute, to be agreed upon by the commissioners, or, failing agreement, to be nominated by the president of the Institute of Civil Engineers in London, and the decision of such engineer shall be adopted by the Commission.

15. The Commission shall correspond upon all matters connected with the duties entrusted to it with the Ministry of Public Works at Constantinople direct, and not through the local authorities.

16. The local authorities shall not interfere in any way with the houses, buildings, land, or other property of the Commission, or with its funds, or with the discharge of their duties by the officers of the police, pilotage, or other services maintained by the Commission, or with wharfs, jetties, docks, or quays in or on the banks of the river belonging to private persons.

17. The transfer to the Commission of any buoys or lights in the approaches to the Shatt-el-Arab shall not be deemed to affect the territorial jurisdiction in the waters where such buoys or lights are placed, or be made a ground on the part of the Imperial Ottoman Government for claiming that such waters are within its territorial jurisdiction.

18. The Imperial Ottoman Government will offer no objection to the continuance of the custom whereby the war-ships of His Britannic Majesty freely ascend the Shatt-el-Arab as far as Kurna.

19. This agreement is made for a period of twenty years; after the expiration of that period it shall be open to either of the high contracting parties to determine the agreement by a year's notice.

[20788] No. 94.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 161.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 15, 1912.*

CAMARAN Lazaret have telegraphed to Sanitary Board here that local authorities anticipate attack on lazaret or island by Seyyid Idris. Possibility of such seems to me very remote.

[20832] No. 95.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 16.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated 14th May, 1912, regarding the Bagdad Railway.

India Office, May 15, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 95.

The Marquess of Crewe to the Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, May* 14, 1912.

REFERENCE is invited to papers regarding Bagdad Railway, &c., forwarded with letter dated 26th ultimo from Secretary, Political Department, India Office. Your views are requested by telegraph. Specification attached to Bagdad Railway convention as suggested in joint minute, section 1 (*b*), should in particular be examined. Territorial questions will for present be reserved, but as regards status of Koweit, Turks will now be addressed in sense of section 2 (*d*). Admiral Slade advises that all buoyage and lighting in approaches to Shatt-el-Arab, whether inside or outside territorial waters, should be taken over by riverain commission. I sent copy of draft convention on 11th instant to resident, Bushire, and Secretary to Government of India, Foreign Department.

(Repeated to resident, Persian Gulf.)

[20827] No. 96.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 163.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 16, 1912.

FOLLOWING from consul at Bussorah, No. 65:—

"Vali of Bagdad, with officers and engineer, left here yesterday in 'Marmaris' to Fao bar. I hear steps will be taken to protect entrance to Shatt-el-Arab."

(Repeated to Bushire.)

[16000] No. 97.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 16, 1912.

WITH reference to previous correspondence, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to state that he is desirous of calling together a committee, composed of delegates from the India Office, Board of Trade, and Foreign Office, to discuss various questions arising out of the Turkish reply, communicated on the 15th April, respecting the Bagdad Railway and cognate questions.

The attitude which His Majesty's Government can most expediently adopt with regard to the distribution of capital in the Bagdad–Bussorah line is a matter which principally calls for the early consideration of the three departments concerned.

Another point, which concerns the India Office and the Foreign Office, is the attitude of His Majesty's Government in respect of the peninsula of El Katr. In a joint minute, dated the 24th April, by Sir A. Hirtzel and Mr. Parker the following passage occurs:—

"It appears to us that there is nothing in the Turkish argument that would justify His Majesty's Government in abandoning one iota of the claims advanced in the memorandum of July 1911, seeing that an important object in embarking on a settlement of Gulf questions was to eliminate the Turks from the peninsula."

Sir E. Grey recognises the cogency of this conclusion, which appears likely to coincide with the views of the British resident in the Persian Gulf and the Government of India.

But he is, none the less, not fully convinced that the desires of the Turkish Government in regard to El Katr should, on account of the British interests involved, be negatived; he is not persuaded that a consolidation of Turkish influence in El Katr, if strictly defined, is inconsistent with the maintenance of British interests, direct or indirect; and he is disposed to think that there are important and desirable compensations in other quarters which might be procurable for concessions to Turkey here, and that such compensations cannot otherwise be secured.

As the Secretary of State for India is aware, the Turkish and Persian Governments signed a protocol in December 1911 agreeing, in certain contingencies, to refer the Turco-Persian frontier dispute to The Hague Tribunal. This agreement was concluded under the auspices of the British and Russian Governments.

It appears to be generally held that, if the dispute is referred to this tribunal, the frontier adjudicated to Turkey in the Mohammerah region is likely to be more favourable to her than the frontier as locally observed, and consequently less favourable to the Sheikh of Mohammerah.

It would, in view of the attitude of His Majesty's Government during the Turco-Persian negotiations of 1911, be difficult for His Majesty's Government to decline to abide by an arbitral award; and, if that award were prejudicial to the Sheikh of Mohammerah, as indeed it might be, even to the extent of the claims advanced by Dervish Pasha on behalf of Turkey in 1850, the resulting situation would be one of great perplexity and difficulty.

Such being the uncertainty of the case, Sir E. Grey is disposed to think that every effort should be made to reach an agreement on the Mohammerah boundary question by direct negotiation with Turkey; but he is not hopeful of the issue of such a negotiation unless His Majesty's Government can offer to Turkey a substantial *quid pro quo* elsewhere, and, in his opinion, it might possibly be found in El Katr.

British interests in the peninsula appear to consist principally in—

(*a.*) The maintenance of the grazing rights of the Sheikh of Bahrein;
(*b.*) The suppression of the arms traffic;
(*c.*) The protection of the pearl industry;
(*d.*) The exclusion of Turkish influence from trucial territory.

Sir E. Grey, as at present advised, can perceive no conclusive reason why the maintenance of these interests should be incompatible with the consolidation of the Turkish position; and, if objections do exist, their importance should, he considers, be weighed in relation to the inconvenience of an adverse arbitral award on the Mohammerah question.

At the same time, he considers that a concession should not be made to Turkey in the El Katr peninsula except in the last resort, and on the conclusion of an agreement satisfactory to British interests and embracing all the questions enumerated in the memorandum communicated to the Turkish Ambassador on the 29th July, 1911, as well as the Mohammerah boundary question.

A further communication will be addressed to you respecting the date on which the proposed inter-departmental committee should meet.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[20788] No. 98.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 294.)

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May* 17, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 161 of 15th May: Cumaran.

Please telegraph to His Majesty's vice-consul at Hodeidah for his views as to probability of attack.

[20827] No. 99.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 17, 1912.*

WITH reference to the India Office departmental memorandum of the 21st June, 1897, and subsequent correspondence, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a telegram from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting that the Vali of Bagdad, accompanied by officers and an engineer, has left for Fao and the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab, with a view to taking measures for the protection of the entrance to that river.*

I am to draw your attention to the footnote on p. 27 of the Foreign Office memorandum of the 3rd April, 1912, respecting the frontier between Mohammerah and Turkey.

Sir E. Grey would be glad to be furnished with the observations of the Secretary of State for India on Sir G. Lowther's telegram; he is disposed to think that His Majesty's Government could not acquiesce in a disturbance of the *status quo*, such as seems to be in contemplation, during the progress of the pending negotiations, and he would be glad to know whether the Marquess of Crewe deems it expedient that Sir G. Lowther should be instructed to make an enquiry as to the intentions of the Turkish Government.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[21355] No. 100.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.—(Communicated by India Office May 18.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *May 18, 1912.*

TELEGRAM to following effect was addressed to Sir G. Lowther on the 15th May by consul, Bussorah:—

"Please refer to my telegram No. 62.

"Accompanied by officers and engineer, Vali of Bagdad proceeded to Fao and bar in the 'Marmaris.' Steps to protect entrance of Shatt-el-Arab will, I hear, be taken."

Following telegram, dated the 17th May, received from resident, Persian Gulf:—

"See telegram, dated the 15th instant, from consul, Bussorah.

"Turks presumably desire to protect Shatt-el-Arab entrance against apprehended Italian action.

"It is inconceivable in any case, quite apart from Turks, that we could permit Italy to bring war into these waters, having regard to our own interests and declarations, our reputation amongst chiefs and peoples of Gulf, and our claim to maintain *pax Britannica* in these waters.

"Cannot present opportunity be used, if the above is conceded, to make Turkey an offer that, in exchange for undertaking by Porte to accept present *status quo* in river *vis-à-vis* Mohammerah, we will either obtain declaration from Italy or prevent her from acting against Bussorah?

"An international bar to action by Italy should, in fact, be found in the actual *status quo* itself, as it has existed for sixty years past, involving, as it does, joint enjoyment of the Shatt-el-Arab."

We can hardly believe it true that Italy intends to bring war to Persian Gulf, and we have no information of any such intention. But we should like to be consulted in the event of this being correct and of His Majesty's Government being in a position to prevent such action, as we consider that, in return for our good offices, much greater concessions might be obtained from Turkey than is proposed by resident.

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* No. 96.

[20889] No. 101.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.

(No. 108.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 18, 1912.*

THE Italian Ambassador called at this Office on the 13th instant and read to Sir A. Nicolson a telegram from the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that the Italian Government had heard that the Turkish authorities might visit their displeasure on those sections of the population of Samos who had accorded a friendly reception to the Italian war-ships on the occasion of the recent "visit" of the latter to that island. The Marquis di San Giuliano, therefore, hoped that Russia, France, and Great Britain, as protectors under the 1830 convention of the rights of the inhabitants of Samos *vis-à-vis* of Turkey, would intervene to prevent the Turkish authorities from dealing severely with the islanders. As the Italian Government recognise the special privileged position of Samos, the Italian squadron did not desire itself to intervene to protect the Samian friends of Italy.

Sir A. Nicolson asked the Marquis Imperiali to let him have the above observations in an *aide-mémoire*. He pointed out to his Excellency that as the Italian Government very properly recognised that Samos was in a special and privileged position, and in a sense under the protection of the three Powers, it would be desirable that the island should be left entirely out of the sphere of active operations.

The Ambassador replied that this was the intention of his Government.

Sir A. Nicolson said he was glad to hear of it, as it was evident that some kind of naval demonstration had taken place.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[21302] No. 102.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 408.)

Sir, *Constantinople, May 13, 1912.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 99 of the 12th March last, on the subject of the proposed construction of new buildings at the Bagdad custom-house, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter which I have just received from Sir R. Crawford informing me that all possible measures have been taken for the temporary relief of the existing situation in Bagdad, but that they have been unavailing to meet the congestion, and that there is now no alternative but to proceed without further delay with the construction of new depôts. Negotiations are now in progress for the erection of the new customs buildings on a site situated in convenient proximity to that selected for the railway station and port to be built by the Bagdad Railway Company.

It appears that there has been some friction between the Vali of Bagdad and the company relative to the choice of a site for the future terminus of the railway. The vali insisted upon the station and port being built on the left bank, *i.e.*, the town side of the river, whilst the railway engineers were of opinion that the right bank offered the best advantages for the full development of what will become an important railway centre. The views of the railway company and their engineers have now been adopted both by the Public Works Department and the Ministry of War; all the plans have been made and approved of by the department, and the customs' administration are now in a position to consider the measures which must be taken to put an end to the disorder which reigns at the Bagdad customs, and to relieve the congestion caused by the accumulation of goods intended for transit. In the negotiations for the erection of the customs' premises near the railway terminus on the right bank of the river, which are now proceeding between the customs and the railway company, I understand the customs are anxious to ensure the removal of the customs' premises to the other side of the river, and therefore away from the town and its business quarter, will not alter the present conditions of clearance of goods from the customs into the town, or expose merchants to expenses not entailed so far; endeavours are consequently being made in the negotiations to secure the easy transport by the railway company of goods from the right bank to the town on the opposite side free of all charges. Should this point be satisfactorily settled, an agreement may be expected very shortly.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 102.

Sir R. Crawford to Sir G. Lowther.

Constantinople, May 7, 1912.

Excellency,

I AM directed by the Administration générale des Contributions indirectes to advert to your Excellency's note of the 28th ultimo, and to state that the question of the congestion of the Bagdad customs, to which reference is made in the extract from the despatch of the British consul-general, has received the serious consideration of this administration.

Steps have already been taken to increase the number of the employés in the custom-house, but the reports in the hands of the administration indicate that no real improvement can be effected until additional warehousing accommodation can be provided. Efforts have been made to acquire temporary premises pending the construction of the new customs buildings, and the Bach Mudir has, with the authorisation of the administration, already established a number of temporary depôts in various parts of the town. It appears, however, that it is impracticable to make further extensions in this direction as no suitable premises are now to be found, and in a recent report the Bach Mudir states that the only course available effectively to meet the congestion (which has been aggravated by the interruption of the transit traffic with Persia) is to proceed without further delay with the construction of new depôts.

The building of these new depôts has been delayed, as Mr. Lorimer points out, until a decision had been taken as to the location of the railway station and the port to be built by the Bagdad Railway Company. But the site for these premises has now been definitely fixed on the right bank of the river, and negotiations are in progress for the erection of the new customs buildings in proximity to this site, provided that suitable arrangements can be made for the easy transport of the goods without breaking bulk from the right bank to the left bank on which the town of Bagdad is situated.

I have, &c.
R. F. CRAWFORD.

[21303] No. 103.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 410.)
Sir,

Constantinople, May 13, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the British acting consul at Jeddah, reporting on the state of affairs in Assyr.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 103.

Acting Consul Abdurrahman to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 20.)
Sir,

Jeddah, April 26, 1912.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 15 of the 6th instant *re* affairs in Assyr, I have the honour to report that the news have been received here of the bombardment of the port of Confuda by the Italian gun-boats, in about the end of second week of April. It is said that the bombardment was continued for several days, and the damage to the town has been very considerable. All Government buildings and most of the houses in the town are wiped away, and fifty persons are said to have been killed and wounded, and the residents fled into the interior and are camping out there. It is very difficult to state with any certainty the exact loss of life and property.

It is also said that Seyyid Idrisse from land attacked the town of Confuda simultaneously with the bombardment by Italian gun-boats.

The Turkish forces under Mohamed Ali Pasha took part in repelling the attack of Idrisse, and is said to have inflicted heavy losses on Seyyid Idrisse's forces.

A subscription list in aid of sufferers at Confuda was opened here two days ago, and about 200*l.* were collected. Further donations are expected and the list is open. Haji Zainal Ali Riza and Banaja headed the list with a donation of 30*l.* each.

I am informed that in Mecca also they are collecting subscriptions for that very purpose, but I am not in a position yet to say what amount is collected there.

Every one now here is dead certain that the Idrisse is in league with the Italians, who they say have provided him with large quantity of war materials like rifles, ammunition, and even with guns.

Faisal Bey, the son of the Grand Shereef of Mecca, it appears was not in time there to take part in this fight, but all the same, he is credited to have subdued several tribes on his way to Confuda.

The news of the bombardment of Confuda by the Italian gun-boats have officially been confirmed here.

Almost every week a messenger comes for the Grand Shereef from Assyr, and it is evident that only those news which suit him are allowed to be circulated in this place.

I have, &c.
S. ABDURRAHMAN.

[21306] No. 104.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 413.)
Sir,

Constantinople, May 15, 1912.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 158 of the 12th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna, enclosing two reports received by him from Sir A. Biliotti, hon. acting vice-consul in the Island of Rhodes, reporting on the Italian occupation of that island on the 4th instant.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 104.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 52.)
Sir,

Smyrna, May 11, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copies of two despatches from Sir Alfred Biliotti, dated the 4th and 5th instant, describing the occupation of the Island of Rhodes by the Italian expeditionary force under General d'Amoglio.

I enclose also the text of a proclamation addressed to the people of Rhodes by Vice-Admiral A. d'Asse Stello, commanding the Italian squadron.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 104.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 30.)
Sir,

Rhodes, May 4, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 28 of the 19th ultimo, I have the honour to report that ever since that date one or more Italian ships have been cruising round or in the vicinity of this island, occasionally calling at Marmarice Bay and searching all mail steamers they met.

This morning the following Italian ships are lurking at 2 or 3 miles on the north-east of this island:—

2 cruisers (1 mast, 3 funnels),
4 cruisers (2 masts, 2 funnels),
3 torpedo-boats,
1 transport, probably with troops.

The garrison of Rhodes, consisting of 1,500 nizams and about 500 native redifs and Mussulman volunteers, are stationed along the sea-shore with orders to oppose, as far as possible, the landing of Italians on the island.

The Turkish officers consider that with the contingent at their disposal they could successfully oppose any landing force not exceeding 4,000 or 5,000 men, but, of course, no resistance is possible against bombardment. A reinforcement of 800 nizams is said to be ready at Marmarice Bay, but has not yet been able to cross over here.

Naturally great excitement prevails amongst the population, but the local authorities, civil and military, are taking all the preconcerted measures to secure public tranquillity on shore.

But there is nothing yet to prove that the Italians intend to make a landing just now.

I am just informed that rifles and ammunition are indiscriminately distributed to Mussulmans of all ages and stations in life.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Enclosure 3 in No. 104.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 31.)

Rhodes, May 5, 1912.

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatch No. 30 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to report that yesterday, at daylight, the Italians have landed a force of about 4,000 or more troops with artillery and 40 or 50 mounted gendarmes at about 10 miles on the eastern coast of Rhodes; fortifying themselves in the vicinity of the village of Kalithies, they followed the road leading to the town of Rhodes.

They dislodged Turkish soldiers from two positions occupied by 300 and 500 men with 2 guns, and continued unopposed their march to the town up to about 2 miles from the town, where they met a patrol of 30 men under a sub-lieutenant, whom they made prisoners. Just before reaching this spot, as they were passing in front of a few Turkish houses, an old man fired a revolver, wounding an Italian soldier in the foot, and was immediately put to death. This is the statement made to me by the Greek peasant of Kalithies who guided the Italians to the town.

While this was taking place, a few of the Italian ships, amongst which was the flagship, which were in sight of the town since the morning, steamed southwards and anchored there. At 2 P.M. an officer landed from a launch flying a white ensign, and handed to the vali, on the part of the admiral, a written notification of Rhodes being blockaded since that date, and that all localities opposing resistance to Italian landing forces would be bombarded, not excepting the town. The bearer of this notification, Commander Salvatore Nicastro, after giving one hour to the vali to give an answer, called on the German acting vice-consul charged with Italian interests, and with him on myself, I suppose to wear out the hour granted to the vali.

Shortly after, I received the communication of which I beg to enclose a copy

The vali answered that he could not surrender the island, that he would retire inland with the troops, and that his only request to the admiral was that he should treat the population with as much humanity as possible. In fact, immediately after this interview, his Excellency rode a horse which he had purposely bought lately and reached, late in the night, the village of Psithos, where, I understand, the Turkish troops had arrived a little before sunset.

At about that same hour the admiral sent for the vali, and in his absence the dragoman of the vilayet and the head of the police, who presented himself as representing the vali, were taken on board the flag-ship. Vice-Admiral A. d'Asso Stello told them that he had a contingent of troops three or four times as large as their own, that he having already cut the road leading to Psithos, the Turkish soldiers would have to fall back, and that their presence in the town would compel him, much to his regret, to bombard it.

He therefore suggested, with a view to evade so useless a massacre, that they should write to the vali and to the commander of the troops to desist from their intention of offering resistance on the promise of not taking them as prisoners; that an armistice had been agreed between the Italian and Turkish troops on the road to the village of Psithos up to 6 o'clock next morning (to-day), and that if he had no answer by that time he would begin to bombard the town. It was with the greatest difficulty,

and only thanks to the personal exertions of M. Antoine Barmann, the German acting vice-consul, that a Cretan was discovered consenting to convey the letter, but he was taken prisoner by the Italian outposts.

The latter never reached its destination, no Turkish troops have fallen back, and the town was not bombarded.

As the Italian contingent which was landed at Kalithies was nearing the town, a party of bluejackets was sent on shore and took possession of the Government House and of part of the town. On the arrival of the troops the land and naval forces joined, and the Italian flag was hoisted on the Health Office flagstaff and saluted with twenty-one guns.

No untoward incident of any sort has marred these operations, and the exchange of shots on the road seems to have been very trifling on both sides. The greatest calm prevails in the town and surrounding suburbs. Early this morning the prisoners in the central prisons escaped by breaking open the gates, but have not misbehaved themselves in any way.

A few Italian soldiers have been located as a protection in all consulates.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

P.S.—The Italian troops are under the command of General d'Ameglio.

A. B.

Enclosure 4 in No. 104.

Proclamation by Vice-Admiral A. d'Asso Stello, Commanding the Italian Squadron.

NOUS soussigné, vice-amiral commandant en chef la deuxième escadre de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie;

Vu l'état de guerre existant entre l'Italie et la Turquie, agissant en vertu des pouvoirs qui nous appartiennent, déclarons que:

A partir d'aujourd'hui, l'île de Rhodes est tenue en état de blocus par les forces navales italiennes.

Les navires neutres devront quitter les ports de l'île dans les vingt-quatre heures, l'Italie ayant pris la détermination d'occuper avec ses troupes tout le territoire de l'île.

Nous notifions aux autorités qui la gouvernent et aux consuls des nations étrangères que toutes les localités où on opposera resistance seront bombardées, y compris la ville de Rhodes, si elle ne se rend immédiatement.

[21308]

No. 105.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 415.)

Constantinople, May 14, 1912.

Sir,

REFERRING to your telegram No. 262 of the 1st May last, and your despatch No. 171 of the previous day, relative to the action of the Vali of Bussorah with regard to the trials of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company's steam launch "Bulbul" and to the notice issued by the Vali of Bagdad on the 10th January last, I have the honour to state that I have experienced great difficulty in drafting a written representation to the Porte, which shall satisfy the terms of your instructions, without committing the embassy to a more definite attitude than His Majesty's Government desire to take up on the question of trivial cabotage, and without tending to arouse undue suspicion on the part of the Turkish Government with regard to the future intentions of His Majesty's Government or of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

I have eventually prepared a draft representation, copy of which I have the honour to enclose, but I have after very careful consideration decided to submit it to you, Sir, before transmitting it to the Porte. I am sensible of the fact that, in taking this course I am depriving the representation of the immediate character which His Majesty's Government desired to give to it, but I think that I shall be considered

justified in this by the importance of the considerations which I am about to lay before you.

With regard to the Vali of Bussorah's action in refusing to allow the trial trip of the "Bulbul" above Bussorah, and limiting the company to a single trip even between Bussorah and Fao, I am instructed to protest against this as being inconsistent with the rights "conferred" on the company by the Turkish Government, inasmuch as these rights infer a corollary right to take all reasonable measures connected with the exercise of the right of navigation, and to maintain that such measures include trial trips, provided they be not used for the purpose of conveying passengers and merchandise. This formula implies a claim to make trial trips not merely between Bussorah or even Kurna and Fao, but between Bagdad and Bussorah, and it appears to me to be open to three objections, of which the hyper-critical legal advisers to the Sublime Porte will not be slow to take advantage in the course of any further correspondence arising out of our protest. By speaking of the company's rights as "conferred" and by expressly stating that the trial trips are not to be used for the conveyance of passengers and merchandise, we shall be taken as admitting that no general right of fluvial cabotage exists. This admission is perhaps already implied in our note to the Porte of the 13th May, 1867, but I gather that His Majesty's Government do not wish to make it in the communication now contemplated.

Secondly, the Porte may contest the view that the performance of such trials can reasonably be regarded as a measure necessary for the proper exercise of the company's rights, seeing that they already have one reserve steamer in addition to the three which they are authorised to run. The Turks are the more likely to raise this point as the "Bulbul" is a newly-imported craft of a somewhat different nature from the other steamers, and they will get the impression either that the company desire to have an extra reserve, or, more probably, that the company hope to add a tug more or less surreptitiously to their existing service of river steamers.

Thirdly, as the permission which the company actually sought was for a trial trip between Kurna and Fao, as the limited permission which they actually obtained was for one trial between Bussorah and Fao, and as we undoubtedly claim that navigation on the Shatt-el-Arab, at least as far as Bussorah is free, it seems to me that it would be dangerous to use the formula suggested by the India Office, without making it quite clear that in the case of the Shatt-el-Arab we claim the right for all British subjects to navigate freely with merchandise, quite independently of the special rights enjoyed by the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company between Bussorah and Bagdad. It is for this reason that I have inserted the fourth paragraph of the enclosed draft, but in doing so I have been unable to avoid differentiating, almost explicitly, between direct trading and fluvial cabotage, a distinction which my instructions enjoin me not to make. I am, thus, on the horns of a dilemma. I have explained my objections to adopting the India Office formula, without safeguarding our claims in regard to the Shatt-el-Arab; while if I retain the fourth paragraph of my draft, I not only differentiate between direct trading and fluvial cabotage, as I have just said, but I at once raise the question as to whether the Shatt-el-Arab extends to Kurna or only to Bussorah. This is a question on which I await your instructions in reply to my despatch No. 372 of the 1st instant. The vali's persistence in refusing to allow the trial as far up as Kurna, when he had yielded on the point of allowing it at all, would seem to indicate that the Turkish authorities regard Bussorah as the extreme limit for general navigation, and I gather from your letter to the India Office of the 12th April that you incline to admit this view, in spite of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company's contention in the opposite sense.

In conclusion of this part of my despatch I may perhaps venture to express the opinion that it would be better not to address any complaint to the Central Government in connection with the "Bulbul" incident, and that the case would be sufficiently met for the present, at any rate, by instructing Mr. Crow to inform the vali that His Majesty's Government, to whom he has reported the matter, are unable to understand the objection to unrestricted trials, and that he (Mr. Crow) must reserve the right to demand an unrestricted permission whenever the question may again arise.

Turning to the question of protesting against the notice issued by the Vali of Bagdad on the 10th January last, I cannot but feel that to invoke thus suddenly the Sened of the 24th February, 1784, will arouse extreme suspicion in the Turkish mind, and that it may intensify the mistrust with which both the Central Government and the local authorities regard the Euphrates and Tigris Navigation Company in particular, and other British enterprise in those regions in a somewhat less degree. I confess that it seems to me undesirable to do this at a time, when, as Mr. Crow justly remarks,

in the despatch enclosed in my No. 372, "Lynch has been rather too prominent" and "always seem to be asking the authorities for something they (the Lynch Company) have not had before." I deprecate the proposed course all the more strongly as Mr. Lorimer's original view, that the notice that did not seem to be aimed at or appear likely to affect any British interest, may now be regarded as having been borne out by the event; for although the three months allowed by the notice have now more than elapsed, no attempt has been made to interfere with the Euphrates and Tigris Company's service to Mohammerah, or with other British traffic in the Shatt-el-Arab. If nevertheless you, Sir, after re-perusing my despatch No. 228 of the 19th March last in the light of these considerations, still think the vali's notice important enough to necessitate a protest on the lines suggested by Lord Crewe, I can only defer to your superior judgment: and in that case I would merely suggest the subsidiary question whether the protest should be embodied in the note referring to the "Bulbul" trials (as is done in the enclosed draft) or whether it might not be more politic to make it the subject of a distinct note separated from the other by a moderate interval of time.

In the course of the foregoing remarks I have not sought to disguise my own opinion as to the inadvisability of approaching the Sublime Porte at all on the lines indicated by the India Office. At the same time, in preparing the enclosed draft I have striven to give it such a form as might in some measure attenuate the force of my own objections.

Thus I have spoken of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company rights as "enjoyed" by the company rather than as conferred on them; I have spoken of a general right to navigate "all portions of the Shatt-el-Arab" in order to leave the question of whether it extends to Kurna or not entirely vague, and I have worded the latter part of the penultimate paragraph in such general terms as to give it the appearance of a general reserve intended to safeguard all British rights of navigation, however derived, between Bagdad and the Indian Ocean, rather than to encourage the Porte to believe that the note cloaks some ulterior design on the Shatt-el-Arab or the two rivers.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 105.

Draft Note verbale.

HIS Britannic Majesty's Embassy under the instructions of His Majesty's Government, has the honour to draw the attention of the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the following matter:—

In the month of March last, His Britannic Majesty's consul at Bussorah communicated to the vali of that province an application from the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company (Messrs. Lynch) to be allowed to conduct certain trials of the steam-launch "Bulbul" belonging to the company. His Excellency the vali at first refused to allow any such trials, and, even when pressed by His Britannic Majesty's consul, he consented to allow only one trial of the said launch and two barges, between Bussorah and Fao.

His Majesty's Government consider that the rights of navigation enjoyed by the company in question on the river Tigris must be held to include the right of taking all reasonable measures which may be necessary to facilitate such navigation, and that the performance of trial trips is comprised in those reasonable measures, as long as such trial trips are not made the occasion of transporting passengers and merchandise between ports on the river.

His Majesty's Government desire further to observe that, as the Shatt-el-Arab has always been regarded as being open to the commerce of all nations, the action of his Excellency the Vali of Bussorah in restricting the company to a single trip between Bussorah and Fao contravenes the general right of British subjects to navigate all portions of the Shatt-el-Arab whether with or without merchandise and passengers.

In this connection His Britannic Majesty's Embassy is also instructed to draw the attention of the Sublime Porte to a notice issued by the Vali of Bagdad on the 10th January last, in which his Excellency announces the adoption of certain measures to prevent the navigation of the Tigris and Euphrates by foreigners, "with the exception of Messrs. Lynch and Co., who have three steamers plying under certain

conditions." His Britannic Majesty's Government note with satisfaction the exception made in favour of the rights enjoyed by the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, but as the notice issued by the vali is couched in very general terms, they wish, as a precautionary measure, to formulate all necessary reserves with regard to the rights of navigation on the Mesopotamian rivers, the Shatt-el-Arab, and the littoral waters of the Persian Gulf assured to British subjects generally, whether by the general rules of international law or by special arrangements and conventions, including more particularly the Austrian "Sened" of the 24th February, 1784, the benefit of which is, as the Sublime Porte is aware, still claimed by His Britannic Majesty's Government in virtue of most-favoured-nation treatment.

His Britannic Majesty's Embassy expresses the hope that the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs will note the reserve contained in the immediately preceding paragraph, and will at the same time cause instructions to be addressed to his Excellency the Vali of Bussorah, in conformity with the views of His Britannic Majesty's Government as set forth in the 3rd and 4th paragraphs of the present *note verbale*.

Constantinople, May , 1912.

[21311] No. 106.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 418.)

Sir, *Constantinople, May 15, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 399 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to report that the press comments on the occupation of Rhodes on the following lines:—

If the capture of Rhodes and other neighbouring smaller islands in the Ægean Sea was intended by the Italian Government as a means of bringing pressure to bear on the Turks to put an end to the war, it has signally failed of its effect, as is made abundantly clear by the comments on recent Italian operations in these regions which fill the columns of the Turkish press.

From the very first reception of the news of the attack on Rhodes, the "Tanin" remarked that it was nothing more than a military demonstration which reveals to the rest of the world the real weakness of Italy as regards the Tripoli campaign, and could only be of service to the Italian Government themselves as a sop to the press, which desired to eulogise the achievements of the Italian fleet. The capture of a few unresisting islands in the Ægean was an easy method of pandering to public opinion in that country.

Writing in the same paper a few days later, Ismail Hakki Babanzade remarks that no amount of activity on the part of the Italians in the archipelago will end the war in Tripoli. She may occupy all the islands if she pleases; Turkey will none the less retain her hold on her African provinces, the defence of which is essential for the preservation of the Caliphate.

If Italy's object was to bring about a revolt among Turkey's Greek subjects she will be equally disappointed: even during the Greco-Turkish War the Ottoman Greeks remained faithful to the Turkish Government, and the occupation of the islands in which the Greek element entirely predominates will drive the Greeks to rise rather against the invaders than against their own authorities. The Italians will find that the Greeks in the Ægean have as much patriotism and valour as the Arabs in Tripoli.

As to the international aspect of the new phase created by Italy's appearance in the Ægean, the Turkish papers are unanimous in recognising the fact that the permanent occupation of the Ægean islands will not for a moment be allowed by the other European Powers. England is primarily held to be interested in the absolute maintenance of the *status quo* in the Eastern Mediterranean, and with her France equally could not afford to allow Italy to make her permanent appearance there. The Mediterranean and the Balkans are intimately connected, and a disturbance of the *status quo* in the one would lead to a similar disturbance in the other. As soon could Europe see Austria at Salonica as Italy in the Ægean. From this hypothesis there is a tendency to argue that, before taking action, Italy must have given assurances to England, who is coming to be more and more regarded as the Power "who holds the strings," that she has no designs on the ultimate possession of the islands occupied, and while on the one hand the native press on the whole takes renewed courage from

the conviction that Turkey is the only Power which Europe, torn by mutual jealousies, will consent to leave in possession of the Ægean Islands, it is tending very strongly to emphasise the long-standing friendship existing between England and this country, and to seize upon every possible occasion to advocate the maintenance and strengthening of that friendship.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[21571] No. 107.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 20).

(No. 168.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 20, 1912.*

FOLLOWING from consul at Smyrna, No. 29:—

"Biliotti reports, 15th May, occupation of several islands near Rhodes, and that fighting with the Turkish troops at Rhodes had just commenced.

"He comments on harsh treatment of Moslem population by the Italians, and especially of all members of Committee of Union and Progress."

[21611] No. 108.

Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 120.)

Sir, *Rome, May 18, 1912.*

WITH reference to Sir R. Rodd's despatch No. 108 of the 5th instant on the subject of the occupation of Rhodes by the Italian troops, I have the honour to report that a telegram was received yesterday morning by the president of the council from General Ameglio, announcing that he had landed two columns during the night at Malona and Calobarda under difficult circumstances, covered by the guns of the Italian vessels. A third column had also been sent from Rhodes to Afandos, which, together with the first two columns, attacked and defeated the Turkish forces at Psithos. The Turkish losses amounted to eighty-three killed, twenty-six wounded; the Italian troops had one officer wounded, four men killed and twenty-five wounded. A later telegram from the general stated that negotiations had been opened with the Turkish commander after the battle, and that the whole of the Turkish garrison on the island had surrendered as prisoners of war, handing over all their arms and ammunition, while the Turkish officers were permitted to retain their swords in recognition of their bravery.

Signor Giolitti accordingly made an announcement to the above effect in the Chamber yesterday, where the news was received with intense enthusiasm, and a telegram of official congratulation was at once dispatched to General Ameglio.

I have, &c.
HERBERT G. DERING.

[21662] No. 109.

Tewfik Pasha to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 21.)

L'AMBASSADEUR de Turquie présente ses compliments à Sir E. Grey et, sur les instructions reçues de son Gouvernement, a l'honneur de porter à la haute connaissance de son Excellence que les navires de guerre italiens qui ont bombardé, le 2 mars dernier, le port de Konfouda, sur le littoral de la Mer Rouge, ont dirigé le feu de leurs batteries non seulement sur les casernes et beaux militaires, mais ont également détruit les maisons et quartiers habités par des non-combattants, tuant et blessant plusieurs femmes et enfants. Ils ont aussi ostensiblement dirigé les obus de leurs canons sur les hôpitaux et ambulances militaires qui avaient arboré le drapeau du Croissant-Rouge.

La méconnaissance par l'Italie des principes du droit de la guerre et des Conventions de Genève et de La Haye ne s'arrête pas là; le droit de visite des navires de guerre italiens dans la Mer Égée, la Méditerranée et la Mer Rouge est continuellement

exercé non seulement avec une rigueur extrême, mais avec la prétention de saisir même les navires hôpitaux ottomans et de considérer comme prisonniers de guerre et d'arrêter tout Ottoman non combattant mais de religion musulmane. C'est ainsi qu'en Tripolitaine, et dernièrement à Rhodes, nombre de musulmans paisibles et dépourvus d'armes ont été arrêtés et conduits en Italie comme prisonniers de guerre.

En informant son Excellence de ce qui précède, Tevfik Pacha, au nom de son Gouvernement, exprime l'espoir que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique, en sa qualité de co-signataire des conventions qui ont eu pour but d'humaniser et de réduire les rigueurs de la guerre, voudra bien attirer la sérieuse attention du Gouvernement italien sur la méconnaissance systématique des règles des conventions internationales.

Ambassade Impériale ottomane, Londres,
le 20 mai, 1912.

[21674] No. 110.

Mr. Greenway to Foreign Office.—(Received May 21.)

Winchester House, Old Broad Street, London,
May 20, 1912.

Dear Sir,

I BEG to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 10th instant requesting that any application which may have been made in regard to dredging the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab should be withdrawn pending a settlement of the negotiations now in progress with the Turkish Government.

In reply, I have to advise that no application has yet been put forward by us, our representative at Bussorah, Mr. Darby, having been requested by His Majesty's consul at that place to defer taking any action in the matter because of the negotiations to which you refer.

I am, &c.
C. GREENWAY.

[21355] No. 111.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 296.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May* 21, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 163 of 16th May.

Are the proceedings of Vali of Bagdad confined to technical work on the bar, or do they include fortifications at Fao? Please instruct consul at Bussorah to telegraph.

[21765] No. 112.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 22.)

Sir,

India Office, May 21, 1912.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant regarding the alleged intention of the Turkish Government to take measures for the protection of the entrance of the Shatt-el-Arab. In reply, I am to say that the Secretary of State for India concurs in the view of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that His Majesty's Government could not acquiesce in any disturbance of the *status quo* to their detriment during the progress of the negotiations, and he therefore thinks that Sir G. Lowther should at once be instructed to make enquiries.

He would further suggest, for Sir E. Grey's consideration, that this opportunity might be taken to address the Turkish Government in the manner proposed in my letter of the 1st instant, and that they should also be pressed to instruct the vali that no local action in matters touching the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab must for the present be taken without their previous approval.

From the Government of India's telegram of the 18th instant, however (copy enclosed), it would appear that a different interpretation is placed locally upon the report of Turkish action, and I am therefore to suggest that it would be well to ask His Majesty's consul, Bussorah, for more precise information. It is obvious that it

would be desirable to close the Persian Gulf against hostile measures by Italy—supposing that such are contemplated, which Lord Crewe finds it very difficult to believe—but whether it is practicable is a question which Sir E. Grey alone can decide. If, however, the Turkish Government is designing fortifications for general protective purposes in the neighbourhood of Fao, His Majesty's Government, while naturally deprecating any such step as tending to create a new situation, might find it difficult to object on any ground of principle, since the Turks already have a fort at that place.

I am, &c.
LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

Enclosure in No. 112.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *May* 18, 1912.

TELEGRAM to following effect was addressed to Sir G. Lowther on 15th May by consul, Bussorah:—

"Please refer to my telegram No. 62. Accompanied by officers and engineer, Vali of Bagdad proceeded to Fao and bar in the "Marmaris." Steps to protect entrance of Shatt-el-Arab will, I hear, be taken."

Following telegram, dated 17th May, received from resident, Persian Gulf:—

"See telegram dated 15th instant from consul, Bussorah. Turks presumably desire to protect Shatt-el-Arab entrance against apprehended Italian action.

"It is inconceivable in any case, quite apart from Turks, that we could permit Italy to bring war into these waters, having regard to our own interests and declarations, our reputation amongst chiefs and peoples of Gulf, and our claim to maintain 'pax Britannica' in these waters.

"Cannot present opportunity be used, if the above is conceded, to make Turkey an offer that, in exchange for undertaking by Porte to accept present *status quo* in river *vis-à-vis* Mohammerah, we will either obtain declaration from Italy or prevent her from acting against Bussorah?

"An international bar to action by Italy should, in fact, be found in the actual *status quo* itself, as it has existed for sixty years past, involving as it does joint enjoyment of the Shatt-el-Arab."

We can hardly believe it true that Italy intends to bring war to Persian Gulf, and we have no information of any such intention. But we should like to be consulted in the event of this being correct, and of His Majesty's Government being in a position to prevent such action, as we consider that, in return for our good offices, much greater concessions might be obtained from Turkey than is proposed by resident.

[21766] No. 113.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 22.)

Sir,

India Office, May 21, 1912.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant on the subject of the Bagdad Railway and connected questions.

In reply I am to say that if, after the very full discussions that have already taken place, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs considers that a further inter-departmental conference is necessary, the Marquess of Crewe will depute a representative of this Office to attend it. But, personally, he considers it sufficiently established that, regard being had to the magnitude of British interests involved, this country cannot with dignity, or, indeed, with safety, agree to participate on a basis of less than 50 per cent., and he has always regarded the distribution of 60 per cent. between Great Britain, France, and Russia (or between the first two alone) as a wholly unacceptable, and even dangerous, alternative. Further, he

holds very strongly the view of his predecessor (see paragraph 9 of Sir R. Ritchie's letter of the 29th March, 1911) that a friendly agreement with Germany is an essential preliminary to a satisfactory settlement, and I am to suggest that the Bagdad Railway Company and the German Government should at once be approached with a view to such a modification of the declaration of the 7th March, 1911, as would enable this country to participate in the Bagdad–Bussorah branch to an extent more nearly proportionate to our commercial interests in that region.

As regards El Katr, I am to say that, in Lord Crewe's opinion, an entirely new situation would be created in the Persian Gulf, and one in every way detrimental to British interests, if the Turks were allowed to consolidate themselves there. Such consolidation is, indeed, contradictory of the main object of His Majesty's Government in attempting a settlement of questions in the Gulf, which was to eliminate Turkish influence as far as possible, and in any case to limit it to the head of the Gulf. That influence in El Hasa has existed only since Midhat Pasha's expedition in 1871, and may be said to exist at present on sufferance, for so long as the quasi-independence of Koweit is maintained, El Hasa must remain more or less isolated. But the construction of the Bagdad Railway to Bussorah or Koweit will undoubtedly enable the Turkish Government to make their authority much more effective; and the further result of allowing, under the sanction of a convention, the consolidation of Turkish power in the Peninsula of El Katr will, his Lordship thinks, be not only to enable the Turkish Government to extend and establish it in the interior, but also to give them a secure and recognised *point d'appui* within the British sphere of interest. The position of Bahrein—as a kind of British enclave in Turkish territory—will be anomalous and precarious, while the Trucial Coast will become the scene of constant intrigues requiring increased vigilance—and therefore increased expenditure—on the part of His Majesty's Government to check it. Moreover, the Turkish desire to intervene jointly with us in the affairs of the Gulf will be strengthened, and will amount to something like a claim if Turkish authority is once recognised and effective.

In Lord Crewe's opinion, no convention, however strictly drawn, can remove these disadvantages. He apprehends that the Turks will always intrigue; that when taxed with it they will deny it or produce sufficiently plausible excuses; while His Majesty's Government, with their many commitments elsewhere, will always have sufficient reason for not taking at any given moment an extreme step which would not be the less inconvenient or expensive merely because it happened to be justified by the terms of the convention. The Turkish garrison at El Bidaa—unrecognised for forty years, but, nevertheless, in possession—may, indeed, be regarded as a symbol of British policy in the Persian Gulf.

Turning now to Mohammerah, Lord Crewe understands that the Turks are advancing extravagant claims, in the hope, by subsequent concessions there, of obtaining corresponding advantages elsewhere; and in your letter under reply the fear is expressed that if this hope is not realised, and the case goes to The Hague Tribunal, the result might be even to give to Turkey the line claimed by Dervish Pasha in 1850. Lord Crewe, as at present advised, sees no grounds for such an apprehension. That line was not accepted by the mediating commissioners, and his Lordship imagines that the evidence upon which they rejected it would weigh equally with The Hague Tribunal. Moreover, it is clear that the Turks do not greatly trust their own evidence, since otherwise they would not contemplate giving the line away in negotiation. It would seem to his Lordship to be more probable that The Hague Tribunal would fix a line approximating to that of the mediating commissioners; and if the alternatives are to allow the consolidation of Turkish authority in El Katr or to deprive the Sheikh of Mohammerah of the district between the mediating commissioners' line and the frontier as locally observed, he would choose the latter as the lesser evil.

In conclusion, I am to enquire whether Sir E. Grey is satisfied that it is impossible to reserve the rights of Mohammerah as regards any reference to The Hague Tribunal. It does not appear that there has been any material alteration in the *status quo* between Howeizah and the Shatt-el-Arab since the Treaty of Erzeroum. In other words, there is no case in that region for arbitration, and the situation therefore differs entirely from that on the northern section, where it is precisely the vital nature of the alterations made in recent years that is the cause of the whole difficulty. This essential difference might perhaps be held to justify Persia in informing the Turkish Government (and His Majesty's Government in supporting her, should necessity arise) that, while there would be no objection to minor rectifications by The Hague Tribunal of the frontier locally recognised as compared with the mediating commissioners' line, no award substantially modifying it will be accepted.

Copy of a telegram addressed to the Government of India is enclosed; their reply, with any further observations that may be necessary, will be communicated to you in due course.

I am, &c.
LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

Enclosure in No. 113.

The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India.

(Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *India Office, May 20, 1912.*

MOHAMMERAH. Foreign Office fear that reference of Turco-Persian frontier to Hague Tribunal might result in loss of a considerable slice of sheikh's territory, since Turks are reviving Dervish Pasha's extravagant claims. They therefore propose to avoid Hague by including Mohammerah in Gulf negotiations and offering Turks consolidation in El Katr in return for locally recognised frontier of Mohammerah. I am inclined to think fears of Hague award rather exaggerated, and that loss to sheikh, if limited to territory west of mediating commissioners' line, is lesser evil than consolidation of Turks in El Katr. I know your views on latter subject, but should be glad to have your remarks as soon as possible on the above considerations.

[21906]

No. 114.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 170.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 22, 1912.*

I GATHER that, in the event of the Italians occupying Mitylene, in all probability Dardanelles will again be closed with mines.

[21926]

No. 115.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 171.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 22, 1912.*

MY despatch No. 381.

The Lebanon Administrative Council having addressed a petition for various reforms to Grand Vizier, French Ambassador thinks that it would be [? expedient] for us to bring forward different programme, and suggests dropping his own recommendation and taking petition as a basis of discussion.

Petition omits points of Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 7 of the French programme and recommends, but without any details:—

(*a.*) Increase of revenue by £T. 25,000.
(*b.*) Creation of a commercial court.
(*c.*) Opening of port.
(*d.*) Recognition of status of Lebanese outside limits of Lebanon.
(*e.*) Judges and members of council to be suspended or dismissed by decision of council instead of by governor.
(*f.*) All complaints against judges to be heard by council.

French Ambassador suggests that, after declining appointment of Ibrahim Souzi, we should put forward these proposals and discuss them on their merits with the Porte. He anticipates that Porte will oppose them.

Generally speaking I am in agreement with my French colleague, though I think point (*e*) gives perhaps too much power to council, and am inclined to doubt wisdom of removal of too much power from the governor.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[20122] No. 116.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

Sir; *Foreign Office, May 22, 1912.*

WITH reference to the letter from this Office of the 3rd ultimo relative to the desire of your company that instructions should be sent to the Vali of Bussorah to permit the substitution of one of their reserve vessels for one of the three now running whenever this may be necessary, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that he has now received a report from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, giving his views on this question.

In Sir G. Lowther's view, it would be unwise and probably useless at the present time to ask for anything in the nature of general instructions from the Central Government to the Vali of Bussorah.

A good precedent was established by His Majesty's Embassy last year for the recognition of your company's right to substitute a reserve steamer for any one of the three normally running steamers which may be incapacitated. The question of using the "Bulbul" was, as far as can be gathered from the telegrams received here from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, rather different, and it need not, therefore, invalidate the precedent of last year, which can be invoked by Mr. Crow whenever the same necessity for replacing one of the steamers by a reserve steamer arises.

It appears to his Excellency that your company's best course would be to instruct their agent at Bussorah to inform Mr. Crow a reasonable time beforehand when they contemplate docking the "Mejidieh," so that, if Mr. Crow finds the local authorities are disposed to question the company's right to substitute the reserve steamer for that vessel, he can telegraph to the embassy, and the necessary action can then be taken at the Porte.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[21906] No. 117.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Dering.

(No. 190.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 23, 1912.*

SIR G. LOWTHER'S telegram No. 170 of 22nd May: Dardanelles.

You should bring the matter privately to the notice of Minister for Foreign Affairs, and express the hope that such action may, if possible and for obvious reasons be avoided if, as seems likely, it is in contemplation.

(Repeated to Constantinople, No. 209.)

[20121] No. 118.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 23, 1912.*

WITH reference to the letter from this Office of the 24th ultimo relative to the permission granted to your company by the Sublime Porte to tow an additional barge on the Tigris for the purpose of clearing off the cargo accumulated at Bussorah, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that he has now received a further despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, giving his observations on the arguments adduced in your letter of the 19th ultimo in support of your interpretation of that authorisation.

Sir G. Lowther states that he sees nothing in your letter to induce him to modify the opinion which he has already expressed as to the interpretation to be placed on the permission, and that he feels convinced that the Porte would conceive a very unfavourable impression of the intentions of His Majesty's Embassy if it now sought to enforce your interpretation on the Ottoman Government. The Porte will undoubtedly be less disposed to accept the company's explanation than the embassy is, and he is of the opinion that the better course would be, if the congestion is really serious, to start afresh and ask for a new permission. It is, however, desirable that such application

[21926] No. 116*.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 300.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 23, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 171 of 22nd May: Lebanon reform.

We cannot consider the new proposals until we receive your detailed observations by despatch and those of His Majesty's consul-general at Beirout.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

should be deferred as long as possible, and that, when made, it should be for a definite period of weeks, which your company should estimate.

I am to state that Sir E. Grey shares Sir G. Lowther's views on this question, and to enquire whether your company would wish instructions to be sent to his Excellency to apply for a new permission as suggested in his despatch.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[22187] No. 119.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 24.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 20th May, relative to the Turco-Persian frontier.

India Office, May 23, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 119.

The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, May 20, 1912.*

IT is feared by Foreign Office that, as the extravagant claims of Dervish Pasha are being revived by Turks, result of referring question of Turco-Persian frontier to The Hague might be that Sheikh of Mohammerah would lose a considerable slice of his territory. They propose therefore to include Mohammerah in negotiations regarding Gulf, thus avoiding The Hague, and to offer Turkey, in return for frontier of Mohammerah as recognised locally, consolidation in El Katr. View to which I incline is that Foreign Office rather exaggerate fear of award of Hague Tribunal, and that Sheikh of Mohammerah's loss is lesser evil than Turkish consolidation in El Katr, so long as that loss is limited to territory west of line fixed by mediating commissioners. As regards El Katr, your views are known to me, but I request that your remarks on the considerations set forth above may be communicated to me as soon as possible.

[22191] No. 120.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 24.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from Colonel Cox, dated the 23rd May, relative to the Turco-Persian frontier.

India Office, May 24, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 120.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Muscat, May 23, 1912.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

The salient points of my letter which was sent to India Office and to Government of India on the 21st instant, replying to Mr. Parker's memorandum of the 3rd ultimo, are as follows, apart from question of jurisdiction over waters of Shatt-el-Arab, which has been separately dealt with:—

1. As regards independence of Kaab, it appears from statement in Wilson's memorandum, p. 8, that in 1620, *i.e.*, prior to date of Sultan Murad's treaty, Kaab was

under Persia. Such evidence as is available, moreover, tends to show that in reality they were never subjects of Turkey.

2. As regards ownership of lands between Mohammerah and frontier recognised locally, present boundary has been recognised repeatedly and unequivocally by local Turkish authorities by the erection of marks and by the maintenance at Diarji of a permanent frontier customs post for many years. In view of such action on their part it should be impossible for them to claim another frontier, to which their pretensions are at least open to doubt, after a lapse of sixty years. Hague Tribunal is hardly likely to support such a claim.

3. Foreign Office seems to be under undue apprehensions with respect to question of sheikh's status and that of his tribesmen in Turkey. Only nomad tribes, not settled agriculturalists such as these, appear to be covered by provisions of Treaty of Erzeroum. It seems extremely unlikely that Turks will attempt to oust these tribesmen, even if (which is very doubtful) they were in a military position to do so, as these people represent bulk of very large agricultural community, and as Turks have no surplus population with which to replace them. If left to the local authorities the problem will probably adjust itself; hitherto it has not caused much practical difficulty. At all events sheikh will in his own interests adopt a reasonable attitude.

4. With regard to boundary in Hawizeh region, it is clear from final paragraph of mediating commissioners' decision, quoted in Wilson's précis, p. 49, that commissioners did not intend their rough diagram to serve as a basis for demarcation, and that they neither visited Hawizeh nor delimited any boundary on the spot in that region. Further, I find that the local boundary which Rawlinson proposed in his memorandum of the 6th January, 1844, pp. 17–18, which has just reached me, and that described in my despatch of the 6th instant, are practically identical. A line west of Hawizeh was also suggested by Layard (see Foreign Office memorandum, pp. 8 and 53). It is inconceivable that any alteration should be tolerated by us of *status quo* in Hawizeh district, of which it is of most vital importance to Sheikh of Mohammerah to have undisturbed possession, especially when categorical statement that the district was not in dispute was made by Rawlinson in 1844.

5. It is a misapprehension to suppose that Sheikh of Mohammerah is seeking territorial encroachment by his policy in purchasing land in Persia. As the sheikh is in respect of these lands amenable to Turkish land laws, and in the position of a Turkish subject like any other foreign landholder, such a contingency does not arise.

6. I have urged that Turks should be informed by us that we have with good reason guaranteed the permanency of the *status quo* as interpreted locally in Arabistan and on the Shatt-el-Arab, having ourselves been close observers of it for the last sixty years, and that we have entered into engagements with the sheikh pledging us to maintain the said *status quo* from which we cannot recede. In view of the statement made by the consul at Bussorah to the authorities at that place, to which reference is made in Wilson's précis, p. 61, the above intimation will be no surprise to the Turks.

7. I have made the suggestion that we might support Turks in their claim to the Zohab lands in exchange for satisfactory settlement, without recourse to The Hague, of boundary question as regards Arabistan. The Turks proposed in 1891 to abandon their claims in Arabistan region in return for acquisition of Zohab lands. They seem to have fairly strong claim in latter district, and we might support it on condition that concession is obtained for oil company, and confirmed by Turks, at Kasr-i-Shirin. Company might even find this to their advantage.

8. View has been urged by me that we have everything to lose by failure to maintain well-established *status quo*, as Arabistan is now the main centre of our interests in Southern Persia, which are bound up with maintenance of position of Sheikh of Mohammerah; and that by such failure value of our engagements in the Gulf generally will be greatly discredited, and other native rulers and communities with whom we have relations will be imbued with the germs of doubt and distrust. I believe in this connection that Sheikh of Koweit's improved and trustful action may be ascribed to his keen appreciation of the patent value of the support rendered by us to his friend the Sheikh of Mohammerah, rather than to what we have done for him personally. Reference is also invited to letter, dated the 6th instant, from admiral, which has my concurrence.

9. I would remark that apprehensions expressed at conclusion of joint memorandum by India Office and Foreign Office, dated the 24th ultimo, are entirely borne out by marked and persistent endeavours recently made by Turks to take advantage of our friendly attitude during negotiations with a view to prejudicing to their own

advantage the local *status quo* in regard to various issues under discussion. I urge respectfully that, if Turks cannot be induced to comply with our requirements at an early date, expediency of terminating negotiations and effectively asserting ourselves at the points in the Gulf where there is a conflict of claims between us should be considered.

(Repeated to Secretary of State for India.)

[22228]

No. 121.

Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received May 25.)

Sir, *Board of Trade, May 21, 1912.*

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st May, transmitting copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, with enclosure, relative to the proposed construction of new buildings at the Bagdad Custom-house.

In regard thereto, I am to point out that in Sir R. Crawford's letter to Mr. Tyrrell, copy of which was enclosed in your letter of the 30th December last, it was stated that "an arrangement may be made for the (Bagdad) Company to construct the Customs buildings in return for a concession to exploit the bonded warehouse and transit depôts."

It is not apparent from Sir G. Lowther's despatch if the negotiations now in progress between the Turkish Customs administration and the Bagdad Company are on the basis indicated in the above quotation from Sir R. Crawford's letter, and I am to suggest, for Sir E. Grey's consideration, that an immediate enquiry might be addressed to Sir G. Lowther on this point.

The Board, as they have already indicated in their letter of the 11th January last, would have much preferred that the construction and exploitation of the bonded warehouses at Bagdad should have been left to the joint action of the Bagdad companies and of the companies which may hereafter operate the line to be constructed between Bagdad and the Persian Gulf.

I am, &c.
GEO. J. STANLEY.

[22323]

No. 122.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 25.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 24th May, 1912, relative to Mohammerah.

India Office, May 25, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 122.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *May 24, 1912.*

MOHAMMERAH. See your telegram dated the 20th May.

Inclusion of Mohammerah in negotiations concerning Gulf is strongly deprecated by us. We consider that concession to Turkey in El Katr would be infinitely more undesirable than possible loss by Sheikh of Mohammerah, in circumstances so obviously outside our control, of small slice of territory. Moreover, we see no reason why, in order to evade obligation of a weak case going before Hague Tribunal, our own interests in the Persian Gulf should be sacrificed.

[22359] No. 123.

Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Foreign Office.—(Received May 25.)

3, *Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London,*
May 24, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd instant on the subject of the substitution of one of our reserve steamers for one of the three steamers now running, for which I beg to thank you.

I take note of Sir G. Lowther's suggestion as to the course our Bussorah agents should take, and am instructing them accordingly.

I am, &c.
T. H. ROBERTS.

[22523] No. 124.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 172.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 25, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 296 of 21st May.

From a somewhat garbled telegram from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah I understand that he is enquiring on point [s] raised, on which he has no information. He says that vali and party returned to Bussorah day following inspection of Fao fort; he hears garrison is to be increased, but has no news of any technical or other operations having begun.

[22419] No. 125.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 173.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 25, 1912.

LEBANON [? reforms].

I am sending copy of consul-general's observations on the French programme by post. They cover all the ground of the council's petition enclosed in my despatch No. 433.

Meanwhile I would suggest that as time is short I should be authorised to recommend council's proposals in general terms to consideration of the Porte and to discuss them with my French and Russian colleagues, but without committing myself.

[22401] No. 126.

Extract from the "Daily Telegraph" of May 25, 1912.

BAGDAD RAILWAY: GERMAN ACTIVITY.

General Review.

(By Perceval Landon.)

MATTERS have at last come to a crisis in the vexed problem of the Bagdad Railway. The presence of Baron Marschall von Bieberstein as German Ambassador in London is admittedly connected with the immediate need of some international agreement. The exact price which the two countries will agree to pay for a mutual understanding—which will, of course, embrace other points at issue besides this trans-Continental line—remains still uncertain. The high contracting parties themselves have probably formed no very clear idea of the shape that the accord will ultimately take. But it is as well that a clear idea should be formed of the present state of the forwardness of the German enterprise and of the probable effect of the completed scheme

upon British interests. Unless the whole facts are known, it is quite likely that the importance of an understanding with Germany in this matter may be underrated by the English public. If that be the case, it is probable that no small amount of criticism will be heard of the terms of the new bargain about to be concluded by the Foreign Office.

The Bagdad Railway was first mooted shortly after the visit of the German Emperor to Constantinople and Syria in 1898. Not to weary the reader with aspects of the matter which are no longer of cardinal importance, it may roughly be said that the concessions obtained from the Turkish Government in 1903, 1908, and 1911 contemplate the extension of the Anatolian Railway already existing at the earliest of these dates.

This line extended from Haidar Pasha, a port on the Bosphorus immediately facing Constantinople, through Afium Hissar to Konia, the ancient Seljuk capital of Anatolia. From Konia the Bagdad Railway proper may be said to begin. A clause was included definitely granting to the concessionnaires the right to extend the line from Bagdad to a point upon the Persian Gulf. The point itself was not named.

This concession was made to a company which, though officially Turkish, was in reality a German enterprise from the outset. The line was to be constructed and managed by a German company. On her side Turkey undertakes to protect the line—a matter which is of some little importance at the present moment. In return for the services thus rendered by the German company, Turkey agreed to pay the famous kilometric guarantee which figures so largely in all discussions about this railway. It may be as well to have the exact terms of this guarantee:—

"Le Gouvernement Impérial garantit au concessionnaire par kilomètre construit et exploité une annuité de 11,000 fr., ainsi qu'une somme forfaitaire de 4,500 fr. par année et par kilomètre exploité pour frais d'exploitation."

This means that under any circumstances a sum of 11,000 fr. will be paid by the Turkish Government annually for each kilometre of the line over which the Germans are actually running trains. In addition to this, Turkey agrees to pay a contingent sum, not amounting to more than 4,500 fr. a-year, in order, when necessary, to make up the gross receipts of each kilometre to the sum of 4,500 fr. a-year. The terms seem generous. It is to be noted that a newly sanctioned section of the railway connecting the port of Alexandretta with the main line near Kalakeui is to be constructed by the Germans without any guarantee from the Turkish Government at all. This, too, will be seen to be a matter of some importance.

Progress of the Line.

The Germans pushed on the railway from Konia through Eregli to Bulgurlu, where for several years the railhead of the line has remained. It is a comparatively small stretch of rails, and it runs through a fertile and well-populated country, presenting no great engineering difficulties. But beyond Bulgurlu the German engineers were faced by nothing less than the gigantic bulk of the Taurus Mountains, and all construction work came to an end for a long time. Through this range there is, and always has been, only one feasible pass—the famous Cilician Gates. Through these gates the armies of every conqueror have passed and repassed between Asia Minor and Asia Major, and the Germans, in their turn, have found it impossible to adopt any other route. But the difficulties to be encountered are gigantic. The work will require scores of tunnels through particularly obstinate and close-grained rock and viaducts across yawning ravines. Afterwards the line descends to Adana, joining the existing little railway between Mersina and Adana, and extending it to the east to the junction to which reference has just been made. From Kalakeui—Osmanieh is the usual name for the place, though the town of Osmanieh lies 10 miles to the east—one line will proceed due south to Alexandretta, or, as it is locally known, Iskanderun. To this important branch I shall make a reference later.

The main line, soon turning south itself and still traversing very difficult country—at one point, between Bagche and Islahie, there is a tunnel 5,500 metres in length—reaches a place called Muslimieh. From this point the trains will run south into Aleppo, the main constructional centre of the entire line, where a very large station and railway works are already in process of construction. The through trains for Bagdad will return as far as Muslimieh, and thence run north-east to Jerablus, on the Euphrates, a place to which the excavations of Mr. D. G. Hogarth have drawn a good deal of attention of late. Here the real desert journey begins, and the difficulties of the line, except for one

or two large bridges, from the engineer's point of view, cease. But from this point political trouble begins.

The course adopted runs eastward, and soon reaches Kurdish territory. These descendants of the ancient Medes have never been properly subdued either by the Turks or by the Persians. They maintain an *imperium in imperio* in the heart of the Turkish Empire, and their objection to railways, which is almost as obstinate as that of John Ruskin, should perhaps have been taken into consideration before the course of the line was finally decided upon. The Kurds near Mosul—the eastern objective of this section of the railway—have announced their intention of preventing by force the construction of any railway through their country. The Bagdad Railway Company has appealed to Constantinople for protection. This the Ottoman Government has been unwilling and probably unable to afford, as its military forces are urgently needed in other directions, and the last thing it wishes is to provoke a Kurdish rising against itself at this moment. The company then requested that Nazim Pasha, the strong ex-Vali of Bagdad, should be given special powers to secure the protection of the work. It is not impossible that this may ultimately be done, but, if so, it will take place in the teeth of the strongest opposition from Shevket Pasha, who at present is practically dictator of Ottoman policy, and whose anger Nazim Pasha incurred by some drastic street improvements in Bagdad which threatened the property of Shevket Pasha's brother. The Mosul-Bagdad section of the line will be an easy matter from an engineering point of view. The right bank of the Tigris is followed without interruption.

Solid Construction begun.

Now it is not generally known in England that the surveys of the entire line from Bulgurlu to Bagdad have now been completed, and that the actual work of construction is being carried on at several points in the north-western part of its course. I had the opportunity the other day of going over the railway works at Aleppo, and I was very much impressed by the solidity and importance of the work there done by the Germans. This is no mere light railway, nor is it being made on the principle adopted by the engineers of the Trans-Siberian Railway. The latter, anxious at all costs to have railway communication with the Far East at the earliest possible moment, were content, so to speak, to "tack together" the new line in the first instance, with the knowledge that they would soon afterwards be obliged to go over the entire work in a more permanent manner. The Germans have decided to carry out the construction in a solid and business-like way from the beginning. To those who know the kind of material usually employed for these pioneer railways, it will be enough to say that the London and North-Western Railway itself might be glad to use the rails and points which are being laid down between Aleppo and Muslimieh. At the present moment the Adana section and the line from Aleppo to the north beyond Muslimieh as far as Akhterin are actually in working order. It is expected that the line will be complete from Akhterin to the Zorma-Ara Bridge at Jerablus by October next. The new line between Alexandretta and Osmanieh, for which permission was only granted on 16th February last year, will be finished on 1st April, 1913.

This branch line is of considerable importance to the company. In the first place, the linking up of Alexandretta with the main line east of Adana will enable the engineers to collect the labour and material for the Mesopotamian stretch with very much greater ease. Secondly—and this is a matter of the first importance, which was pointed out to me by a resident in Northern Syria, who was considerably interested in the matter—the facts are that this branch line is a direct communication between Mesopotamia and the nearest and best European seaport, and that no tariff conditions attach to this ungiaranteed enterprise. Thus the company will be able, if it wishes to do so, to differentiate the tariffs respectively imposed by it, so as largely to transfer any general profit earned by the whole line from the guaranteed section to their own!

An important Point.

In this connection it is important to remember the tariff laid down by the concessions. By this the rate to be charged for the transport of cereals—which, of course, will be by far the most important freight—is at the rate of 22 paras per ton per kilom. But there is a significant clause, providing that cereals carried in trucks for a distance of not less than 900 kilom. shall pay a special rate of only 6 paras per ton per kilom. Put into plain English, this means that any grain taken to Alexandretta from the fertile districts of Mesopotamia—the 900th kilom. is reached about where the River Zab

falls into the Tigris above Tekrit—will only have to pay about 25*s.* per ton for the whole journey. In view of the intention of the Turkish Government—and if it is not now the purpose of the Turkish Government it will shortly be to the interest of the German Company—to develop Sir William Willcocks's schemes, and make of Mesopotamia a fertile grain-producing country, it is as well to remember that grain carried by this railway will not have to pay Suez Canal dues. We all know that it is an axiom of economists that railway-borne freight-rates cannot compete with ship-born freight-rates. This is an argument which has been so repeatedly used to minimise the importance of the Bagdad Railway that it is as well to bear in mind the special circumstances of marine competition in this case.

Moreover, under the concession there is nothing whatever to prevent the Germans reducing the rate still further. They do not need for this purpose to obtain the permission of the Turkish Government: it is only necessary for them to give three days' notice of such a reduction, and the thing is done. Should the company, in order to prevent sea competition, think it advisable that American precedents should be followed, the main line might be thrown open for the almost gratuitous transport of grain. There is always the kilometric guarantee to persuade them to this course, for though this reduction may be brought about at the discretion of the concessionnaires, without the assent of Turkey, the latter is still obliged to make good the 4,500 fr. per kilometre supplement.

What, it may be asked, is the consideration which has induced Turkey to sign so one-sided an agreement? We have seen that she is bound to pay a sum, which is capitalised at 269,110 fr. for each kilometre, constructed and in operation. She is, moreover, bound to make up any deficiency in the annual receipts to the sum of 4,500 fr. a-year. In return for this she receives, on paper, all sums received per kilometre between 4,500 fr. and 10,000 fr. Above 10,000 fr., 60 per cent. go to the Government and 40 per cent. to the company. It would be difficult to draft a concession which held out more inducements to the concessionnaires to minimise the receipts upon the guaranteed main line, and increase them upon their own short, unguaranteed railway, for which they have a right to charge what they please.

The company has not been slow to realise the advantages of its position. Alexandretta, which, even as it exists to-day, is the best harbour on the Syrian coast, is being transformed by the construction of a breakwater 2 kilom. long, and enormous quays which are to be fitted with every modern apparatus for handling grain. At Haidar Pasha, opposite Constantinople, the company possesses valuable privileges regarding the handling of freight, but the company clearly intends to make Alexandretta the chief port. Naturally enough.

Extensions and Branches.

There remain for consideration certain other extensions of the main line which require a passing notice. Dismissing as of small importance proposed branches to Marash and Aintal, to the north of Aleppo, an important feeder of the line runs down from Kharput, through Diarbekr and Mardin, to El Helif. This line, which taps a rich and important territory, largely inhabited by industrious Armenians, will sooner or later be extended northwards to meet what is erroneously called the "French" railway running up from Samsun, on the Black Sea, to Sivas. The construction of these rails will afford Russia the best steam accommodation with southern Asiatic waters, at least, until the new Trans-Persian line has been constructed.

From Mosul a line will be thrown out towards Erbil, if Russian consent can be obtained. It will be remembered that the construction of these branch lines directed towards the Russian sphere of influence in Persia was a matter of special discussion during the "Potsdam" discussions of last year. We shall have to wait to see what the actual form of the agreement between Germany and Russia has now taken. A proposed line from El Baj, on the Tigris, to Hit, on the Euphrates, is talked of, as also is a branch in the same district to the east of the main line linking up Khurmatli with Sadiyeh. The latter is of no importance. The former may suddenly spring into prominence if the petroleum of Hit is properly developed.

But beyond all question, the most important extensions of the Bagdad line are those which are to link it respectively with the Russian railways in Persia, on the one hand, and on the other with the waters of the Persian Gulf. Of these, mention must be made in a separate article.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[22420] No. 127.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 174.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 26, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 294 of 17th May.

Consul at Hodeidah considers possibility of attack on Camaran most improbable. Attack by Seyyid Idris, who is at present in mountains, hard pressed by the Turco-Arab forces, only feasible with assistance of Italians, with whom he is said to be co-operating.

[22443] No. 128.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 422.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May 18, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 413 of 15th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna, enclosing four despatches from Sir A. Biliotti, giving further details regarding the Italian occupation of Rhodes.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 128.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 53.)
Sir, *Smyrna, May 13, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of four despatches received from Sir Alfred Biliotti at Rhodes, giving full and interesting details of events connected with the occupation of the island by the Italians.

I have already telegraphed to your Excellency a summary of these and the two despatches which preceded them, as I thought it would meet your Excellency's wishes that I should send you the earliest possible information regarding events at Rhodes.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 128.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 32.)
Sir, *Rhodes, May 6, 1912.*

THE following is the information I have obtained with regard to the Italian forces which arrived at this island on the 4th and 5th instant:—

Ships under the command of Vice-Admiral d'Esse Stello: (1) "A. di Saint Bon"; (2) "Filiberto"; (3) "Benedetto Brin"; (4) "Regina Margherita"; (5) "Vittorio Emmanuele"; (6) "Regina Elena"; (7) "Napoli"; (8) "Roma"; (9) "San Georgio"; (10) "San Marco"; (11) "Amalfi." Twenty destroyers and torpedo boats and nine transports.

Troops under the command of Lieutenant-General d'Ameglio: From 8,000 to 10,000 of all arms, infantry, bersaglieri, carabinieri, cavalry, or mounted gendarmes, several batteries (mountain guns), about 200 or 300 horses and 1,000 mules. Part of these troops came straight from Italy, part of Tabrouk.

There was on board an extraordinary large supply of victuals, including live stock, and of all sorts of requisites, even fodder and firewood.

The landing of this enormous material, and of horses, mules, and bullocks took place without the slightest hitch.

Italian officers explain this great display of armament by the anxiety of the King to avoid useless loss of life by impressing the Turks with the impossibility to resist such superior military forces.

According to Italian naval officers, the Island of Stampalia, or Achiopalia, offers good and ample shelter even for cruisers and battle-ships, at all events during the summer season.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Enclosure 3 in No. 128.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 33.)
Sir, *Rhodes, May 7, 1912.*

THE provisions of flour, rice, beans, &c., and the ammunition which had been stored for some months in the village of Psithos, as reported in previous despatches, were lately removed to the town under the conviction that the Italians would never attack Rhodes.

On their sudden arrival on the 4th instant the Turkish garrison, which had hastily been stationed outside the town, having had to retire inland, had time to take with them only a scanty supply of both.

The Turkish forces consisted of 1,500 nizams and of about 500 redifs and volunteers. The latter were soon followed by their families. These useless mouths having been sent back to the town by the military commander, desertion, which had begun since the first day among volunteers, Christian, and even Mussulman nizams, increased gradually. I am told that they got rid of their arms and uniforms as best they could to evade detection.

On the arrival of the Turkish troops the inhabitants of Psithos having taken fright, the military commander told them to remain where they were, as they had nothing to fear from them. But they locked their houses and took refuge in neighbouring villages, which displeased the commander. After the departure of the peasants, the soldiers broke open the doors and took possession of all the houses. In some cases they threw in the street the clothing of the peasants, and there can be no doubt that they will make free with victuals and with anything else to their convenience.

It is rumoured that the vali parted company from the military commander, who held different views from his own.

Greek peasants came two days ago and complained that Turkish soldiers had murdered one of their co-religionists in their village.

Archanghelas peasants, who, after this incident, have removed to Afands, relate it as follows: Monday last six soldiers presented themselves at the entrance of the village and asked for bread, as they were hungry. It was refused to them unless they gave up their arms. Five of them complied with the request; the sixth, a negro, refused to do so. A discussion having taken place, the negro shot dead a peasant. His co-religionists fired on the five unarmed soldiers (the negro having run away), killing one and wounding three, who managed to get away. The military commander sent for the five rifles, which the Christians refused to give up, and the incident rests there at present.

Be this as it may, it is certain that courageous as the nizams are known to be, it is impossible to hope for a favourable issue for them. As they cannot be relieved neither by land nor by sea, all they can do in presence of the overwhelming Italian forces is to die to the last man, but this useless sacrifice of life cannot enhance the well-established value of the Turkish army, nor promote the interests of the one or the other belligerent. The Italian military authorities are anxious to avoid as much as possible useless bloodshed, and the vali is of the same opinion. But the military commander persists in his intention to resist to the last, and this caused the dissension between them.

However, it is in the power of the Italians to reduce the Turks by famine, but meanwhile, as the Turkish soldiers will not allow themselves to be starved to death, they will certainly freely pillage villages unless Italian troops are stationed all over the island.

The crops not having been yet gathered, the supply of corn and flour in the villages is rather scarce, and what may take place in the forementioned eventuality will certainly cause great distress in the island.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Enclosure 4 in No. 128.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 34.)

Rhodes, May 8, 1912.

Sir,

THE Vali Soubhi Bey, the Defterdar Athanasse Remzi, a Greek, and the Tahrirat Mudiri (Mektoubji) Faik Bey, accompanied by six gendarmes, were captured by an Italian torpedo boat yesterday afternoon in the vicinity of Lindos in a sailing boat chartered for 100 liras to convey them on the opposite coast of Anatolia.

They are now on board the "Regina Margherita," where, I am told and believe, he is treated with due regard and courtesy.

The vali having sent for his clothes on shore, his servant was allowed to take them to him on board.

I have, &c.

ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Enclosure 5 in No. 128.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 35.)

Rhodes, May 8, 1912.

Sir,

ONE hundred and five war prisoners and very active members of the Union and Progress Committee have been apprehended, embarked, and despatched this day to Italy on board an Italian transport. While using due severity, Lieutenant-General d'Ameglio takes care to hurt as little as possible Mussulman susceptibilities.

He has offered the health office, the custom-house, and the telegraph staffs to keep their offices with the same salaries and no obligation to take an oath of allegiance to the King of Italy. It is on their positive refusal that Italians or other Christians have been appointed to take their places.

The cadi having called by appointment, and not having been received by mistake, General d'Ameglio hastened to send his excuses by an aide-de-camp and his own carriage, which conveyed the cadi to the Consac to the satisfaction of all parties.

I have, &c.

ALFRED BILIOTTI.

[22445]

No. 129.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 424.)

Constantinople, May 18, 1912.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 250 of the 25th March last, on the subject of the Turkish Government's objections to the methods said to have been employed in the relief of the Bagdad consular guard, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's consul-general at Bagdad dealing at length with the points raised by the Turkish Ambassador in London.

With particular reference to the point raised regarding the statement that the rifles of the out-going detachment were retained to add to those brought by the relieving force, a point on which you desired my observations, it will be seen from the enclosed despatch that the allegation is not one which it need be found necessary to refute at any great length, since, as Mr. Lorrimer states, it was obvious to all who witnessed the departure of the out-going detachment that they marched out of the town carrying their arms with them.

I do not propose to take any action on Mr. Lorrimer's suggestion that the Turkish Government might be asked whether they would object to the relieving and relieved guards with their impedimenta being landed and embarked in future by the steamers carrying them, at the residency itself, when such a procedure was considered by the British authorities to be convenient, as I do not consider it advisable at present to put forward any suggestions here for a change in the recognised procedure.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 129.

Consul-General Lorimer to Sir G. Lowther.

(Secret.)

Your Excellency,

Bagdad, April 14, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Excellency's despatch[a] No. 7 of the 21st February, 1912, to my address, enclosing copy of another -No. 161 of the same date—to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on the subject of the last relief of the Bagdad residency guard. A copy of my letter to the Government of India, No. 91 of the 6th February, 1912, also the Bagdad Summary of Events for January 1912 (*vide* section 6, paragraph 5, of the same) have probably reached your Excellency since the despatches mentioned above were written; but, in view of your Excellency's present communication, it seems desirable that I should supplement in some points the information which I have already given.

The alleged increase in the numerical strength of the guard has been disposed of in the summary above quoted.

It is true that the relieving guard marched through the town of Bagdad, but such has always been the custom when that course was the more convenient. When the detachment of the 117th Mahrattas left Bagdad in April 1911—to go back no further—they passed in military order through the streets to the place of embarkation, and no objection was made by the local or central authorities. Before 1905 the British military detachment at Bagdad was quartered in a building at some distance from the residency, and every day and night the men for duty were marched to the residency through the public street in uniform and under arms; this custom ceased only when the new residency building, which has its own barracks, was occupied. I venture respectfully to deprecate any new understanding which would have the effect of confining the detachment to the residency at the discretion of the Turks instead of at our own. Already we do not allow the men, except in a body on their arrival or at their departure, to go into the town in uniform; and this is a considerable concession to have made to Turkish feeling. It might, possibly, do no harm to enquire of the Turkish Government whether they would object to relieving and relieve guards, with their impedimenta, being landed and embarked in future, by the steamers carrying them, at the residency itself, which is on the river below the ordinary landing stage, when such a procedure was considered by the British authorities to be convenient. Ordinarily there could be no objection on our part to such a course, but rather the reverse; and the Turkish authorities would be spared the sight of foreign troops marching through the town. Perhaps, however, the Porte might suspect that the proposal was made with the idea of withdrawing our military arrangements further from their observation.

The allegation that the relieved guard on the last occasion left their rifles behind at Bagdad is, of course, without foundation. The relieved guard always take their rifles away with them, and the relieving guard always bring their own. This is, I believe, the regular military procedure in the relief of troops, and it has not been departed from at Bagdad in the most recent or in any other instance. No step then has been taken, as evidently suggested to the Porte, in the direction of adding to the number of rifles in the residency. Anyone who witnessed the departure of the last detachment must have seen that they took their rifles, and the carelessness of the vali in adopting an incorrect report to the contrary is to be regretted. I am inclined to attribute the whole incident to the wilful misrepresentations of some mischief-maker in his entourage.

In my letter to the Government of India quoted above, I have dealt with the question of the unnecessary and somewhat large consignment of ammunition sent along with the present guard, and steps will no doubt be taken in India to prevent the recurrence of a similar incident. But pretentions on the part of a foreign Government to regulate the amount of ammunition with which British troops, wherever quartered, may be supplied are surely, to use a moderate term, inadmissible. The residency guard will require ammunition only in case of failure of the Turkish Government to maintain order at Bagdad; and it is for the British Government, not for the Porte, who would deny the possibility of any such failure, to estimate how much ammunition might be required in such a contingency.

[a] I have now seen your Excellency's despatch No. 8 of 26th February, 1912. The information for which it calls is given in the present letter.—A. G. L., 12.4.12.

As regards the substitution of Hindus for Mahommedans in the guard, I may say that I at first regarded the change, for which I was unprepared, with some misgiving; but in practice the new arrangement appears to be working well. There are even advantages in it, such as the absence of that social contact between the sepoys and the inhabitants of the town from which quarrels and other difficulties are liable to arise. But it is still too early to pronounce with confidence on the merits or demerits of the change.

Your Excellency has remarked that the present time is not one at which the abolition of the residency guard could be contemplated by anyone; and I venture, very respectfully, to adduce some local considerations in support of that view. Bagdad lies much more remote from European military aid than Tien-tsin or even Peking, and it may be questioned whether the political equilibrium of Turkey is more stable at the present day than that of China seemed to be not so very many years ago. The massacres at Adana, &c., in 1908 are still very recent occurrences; and twice since my arrival here at the end of 1909 some alarm on their own account has been expressed by the Christian inhabitants of Bagdad. In a different category of events, more peculiar to this province, stands the capture of Shatrah town so lately as 1910 by marauding Arabs, notwithstanding the presence in the place itself of a considerable Turkish garrison. Again, at the present moment the population of the Turkish Empire shows signs of dividing into two political parties, one of which seems to attract the non-Turkish and numerically stronger elements; and this development is nowhere more ominous than in Mesopotamia, where the Arab element predominates over all others and is, as regards domestic affairs, markedly anti-Turkish.

I have touched on these subjects in a previous communication also,* where I tried to show that the maintenance of the British military guard and R.I.M.S. "Comet" at Bagdad will be necessary until the present precarious stage in the history of Turkey has been successfully passed—a condition of the approaching fulfilment of which there are as yet no indications.

I have, &c.
J. G. LORIMER, *I.C.S.*,
Political Resident in Turkish Arabia and His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, Bagdad.

[22451] No. 130.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received May* 28.)

(No. 431. Confidential.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May* 21, 1912.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 345 of the 24th of last month, I have the honour to report that after several delays and postponements on the part of the Ottoman Government, the tenders put forward by Messrs. Jacksons and Pearsons for the Mesopotamian irrigation contract came up for adjudication on the 18th instant.

The commission appointed to examine these tenders arrived at the following decisions, which were embodied in their report read out to the representatives of the competing firms at the meeting:—

1. That the firms submitting tenders accompanied by letters in which certain reserves were made would be disqualified.

2. That both Jacksons and Pearsons had put in tenders accompanied by such letters.

3. That Jacksons had subsequently withdrawn their letter.

4. That Pearsons, not having withdrawn their letter, were consequently disqualified ("hors concours"); and

5. That Jacksons were, therefore, declared "adjudicataires provisoires." Their prices were, however, considered very high ("exagéré") and they should be called upon to make reductions. Failing the reduction of their figure, the commission thought it would be advisable to cancel the present adjudication and invite new tenders.

* See paragraph 2 of the memorandum enclosed in my despatch No. 729/35 of the 20th August, 1910: "Proposed reduction of expenditure in the British consulate-general at Bagdad, &c."

Pearsons meanwhile had put in another letter in which certain modifications were made, but the commission refused to accept this document.

The matter now rests with the Minister of Public Works, and it is not quite clear whether he is merely endeavouring to induce Messrs. Jacksons to offer a lower price, or whether for other reasons he is inclined to deal with Pearsons.

Messrs. Jacksons' representative informs me that they consider the attempt on the part of the Turkish Government to obtain a reduction, after an open tender, unfair, and that there is a possibility of their principals declining to proceed with the matter.

I shall keep in touch with these gentlemen and see if any representation can properly and usefully be made on their behalf now that Jacksons remain officially the sole "adjudicataires."

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[22453] No. 131.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received May* 28.)

(No. 433.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May* 22, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 381 of the 4th May and to my telegram No. 171 of to-day's date, I have the honour to forward herewith copy of a petition addressed by the Lebanon Council of Administration to the Grand Vizier praying for various reforms.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 131.

Petition to the Grand Vizierate by the Lebanon Council of Administration.

THE privileges accorded to the Lebanon were necessitated by its rocky and mountainous position and by special circumstances; the "règlement" made for the mountain was compatible with that time, *i.e.*, fifty years ago, as is always the case when laws are elaborated.

Whereas the Imperial Government are doing their best to improve and ameliorate the state of the whole empire, and as the Lebanon is also in great need of amelioration, this council, which represents the Lebanese people, finds it necessary to submit the following demands which are very necessary for its fair administration, so as to be added to its organic statutes:—

1. The increase of revenue by £T.25,000, because the sum of £T.35,000 has never been enough to cover the expenses of the administration, and that the Imperial Treasury, which used to cover the deficit, has many years ago stopped the payment, and because the cost of living was much cheaper than it is now.

2. The courts in the Lebanon to be allowed to try commercial affairs or to create a special commercial court. Owing to the increase of commercial affairs in the Lebanon, and to save Lebanese from heavy expenses and trouble, the more so as the commercial cases of the commercial court at Beirout are now sent on appeal to the Civil Court of Appeal at Beirout, which court has no jurisdiction over the Lebanon.

3. Ports to be opened in the Lebanon. The interdiction to steamers to touch Lebanese ports is a great impediment to progress.

4. The Lebanese holding certificates from the Lebanon Government and paying taxes to the Lebanon Treasury to be recognised as Lebanese, and not to be forced to perform military service.

5. Whereas, according to article 11 of the Lebanon organic statutes and to protocols of 1892, 1897, 1902, and 1907, judges in the Lebanon must not be dismissed without previous enquiry by the administrative council, this council, in order to carry out the object of this clause, demands that it be stipulated that no judge can be suspended without a preliminary enquiry and a decision rendered by the council. This stipulation is demanded still more urgently on behalf of the members of this council in order to secure to them their independence in the execution of their duties.

6. Whereas the application of the foregoing rule would meet with some difficulty, the council solicits its clear definition, and that it be enacted that every complaint presented against a judge should be referred to the council for investigation and for a decision.

The foregoing are some of the modifications which this council deems much needed, and it begs to lay them before your Highness with the request that they may be submitted to the competent department for their consideration, acceptance, and settlement.

April 10, 1328 (*May* 2, 1912).

[22675] No. 132.

Sir G. Laclher to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 177.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May* 27, 1912.

FOLLOWING from consul at Smyrna, No. 30:—

"Vice-consul at Rhodes reports issue of proclamation that all taxes, both Government and municipal, which were formerly levied by the Turkish Government shall continue to be paid and collected by Italian financial authorities, that the Public Debt Administration shall continue to collect its revenue under the control of the Italian authorities, but that Régie is abolished and replaced by the Italian tobacco monopoly."

[22837] No. 133.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 29.)

(No. 74.)
Sir, *Athens, May* 24, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 67 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to report that M. Coromilas, the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, tells me the Government are much preoccupied with the question of the ultimate fate of the islands in the Ægean occupied by the Italians. The Italian authorities seem to be holding out hopes to the islanders that they will not be put back under the Turkish yoke; if these hopes are not realised, the greater the jubilation that is now shown the more severe will be the retribution hereafter. M. Coromilas thinks that the Italians have succeeded in raising another very difficult and dangerous question, and that the least favourable settlement which can possibly be agreed to after the war must at any rate secure to the islanders, under European guarantee, the enjoyment of the special privileges granted by Solyman the Magnificent and confirmed by successive Imperial firmans, but frequently infringed by gradual encroachments of the Ottoman administration. The Powers might rest assured that the question of the fate of these islands would be pertinaciously kept before them. There is in Egypt a considerable and influential community hailing from the Sporades, who would make their voice heard. To my remark that nothing more had been heard of the meeting which was to have been held by the similar community here, M. Coromilas answered that they were afraid of compromising their fellow-islanders at this early stage.

As regards the present moment, his Excellency said that the Italians forbade the seafaring population of the islands to hoist the Turkish flag; what flag then were they to hoist so as to go about their ordinary small carrying trade without molestation?

I have, &c.
F. ELLIOT.

[22934] No. 134.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 29.)

Sir, *India Office, May* 28, 1912.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram received from the political resident in the Persian Gulf on the subject of the ownership of the Shatt-el-Arab. The views of the Government of India have not yet been received, and in the meantime the Marquess of Crewe proposes, subject to Sir E. Grey's concurrence, to put before them the points set forth in the enclosed draft telegram.

I am to draw special attention to point (2), because it deals with a question which has been the subject of strong representations to the Turkish Government in the past, and which may be revived if it should prove to be their present intention to fortify the approaches to the Shatt-el-Arab. In Lord Crewe's opinion the agreement arrived at between the Turkish and Persian Governments in 1848 can hardly be described, as in the British memorandum sent to Sir W. White on the 11th July, 1888, as a "reciprocal engagement," in the sense that the two Powers engaged themselves to one another not to fortify their respective banks. It seems rather to have been, as the Turkish Government maintained, a self-denying ordinance of a purely temporary nature, whereby each Power bound itself to abstain from fortifying its own bank only so long as the other Power exercised similar abstinence. If this view is correct, it is not open to either Power (or to Great Britain on behalf of either Power) to protest against the erection of fortifications by the other as a violation of the agreement, but only on more general grounds—such as that they threaten the free navigation of the river, or constitute a common danger.

The issues, therefore, are (1) do we now admit that by the arrangement of 1848 the Turks recognised, as, according to their note of the 31st July, 1888, to the Persian Government they themselves appear to recognise, the right of Persia to erect such fortifications; and (2) if so, does that right carry with it any implication as to the ownership of any part of the river itself? and Lord Crewe will be glad to learn if the draft telegram correctly represents the legal advice which Sir E. Grey has received on the subject.

The rest of Sir P. Cox's telegram discusses questions of policy which can best be considered later in connection with his longer telegram of the 23rd May, copy of which is enclosed herewith.*

I am, &c.
LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

Enclosure 1 in No. 134.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *May* 23, 1912.

REFERENCE is invited to telegram from Government of India and telegram dated the 8th instant from Secretary of State.

A letter dealing with advance copy of Foreign Office memorandum was posted by me demi-officially to London and Simla on the 21st instant. Papers posted in London on the 26th ultimo have now been received and studied by me; and I now beg that receipt of above-mentioned letter may, if possible, be awaited, and that it may be treated as official.

I see no reason, after studying carefully the above papers and other records, to modify views regarding Shatt-el-Arab expressed in my telegram dated the 5th instant. Further argument or evidence has, on the contrary, been presented by me favouring Persian claim and possibility of Hague Tribunal upholding it. On p. 291 of Wheaton, for example, it is required, as a necessary condition of exclusive sovereignty over an interstatal river, that there shall be "prior occupation or long undisturbed possession." It appears from historical and other evidence that no such possession has been enjoyed by Turkey, nor is it by treaty explicitly reserved to her; and since the Turkish note regarding Fao fortifications, enclosed in despatch of the 12th August,

* Printed separately.

1888, expressly admitted that another most important sovereign right, viz., that of fortifying Persian bank, rested reciprocally with Persia, I submit that the "principle of construction" quoted on p. 42 of the memorandum cannot be applied. Forts on the Persian bank of the entrance of Karun into Shatt-el-Arab were in existence in 1857. Moreover, use of the river has been habitually enjoyed, and police rights have been exercised there, not only by Persian merchant-vessels, but also by Persian men-of-war.

No evidence is known to me for statement on p. 42 of memorandum that river could not be navigated by Persians without liability to Turkish dues.

Provided, however, that adherence to the mid-channel line for old-established purpose, such as jurisdiction over islands, exercise of fishing rights, and responsible police arrangements, can be secured, I consider on the whole that no reason for interesting themselves will be afforded to Persian Government. In that case proposed Turkish commission might be agreed to, explicit permission to represent interests of Sheikh of Mohammerah being given to our own representative on the board.

Enclosure 2 in No. 134.

Draft of Telegram to the Government of India.

(Secret.)

COX'S telegram No. 93 M. of the 23rd May.

Please consider following points:—

1. If, as we incline to believe, Treaty of Erzeroum assigned waterway to Turkey, further evidence is unnecessary.

2. As regards fortifying banks, see p. 27 of Parker's memorandum, where text of Persian note is quoted. Admitting, for sake of argument, Persian right to fortify left bank, Foreign Office are advised that such right does not necessarily imply any ownership in the river.

3. As regards forts at entrance to Karun. Mohammerah town, where such forts existed in 1848, was expressly excepted from prohibition of 1848.

4. Treaty of Erzeroum gives right of navigation to Persian ships without specifying war-ships.

5. Evidence regarding liability to Turkish dues is statement in Canning's despatch No. 239 of the 1st November, 1844, which is quoted verbatim on p. 19 of Parker's memorandum. Canning adds that such dues formed part of annual revenue of Bagdad pashalik.

[22941] No. 135.

Sir G. Louther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 29.)

(No. 178.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 29, 1912.*

I GATHER that Turks are somewhat alarmed at unnecessarily large number of Italian troops that are being landed on practically defenceless islands, and expect this means a blind for an attack in force on the mainland, Smyrna being the objective, or a landing farther north with a view to turning the defences of the Dardanelles.

[22953] No. 136.

Sir F. Cartwright to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 29.)

(No. 49. Very Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Vienna, May 29, 1912.*

I LEARN very confidentially that the German Ambassador here declared to Count Berchtold before the latter's departure for Berlin that any proposal to prevent Italy occupying Mitylene or other of the Northern Ægean islands by means of a veto from Germany and Austria would meet with the opposition of the German Government. M. de Tschirschky said that the task of preventing such occupation should be left to England and France, who would otherwise draw advantage from the friction which any such attempt by Germany and Austria would cause between the members of the Triple Alliance.

[22419] No. 136*.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 307.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 29, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No 173 of 25th May: Lebanon reforms.

You may act as you propose. You will doubtless put forward your objections to (E) (6). See your telegram No. 171 of 22nd May.

I am assured by the same person who gave me the above information that Count Berchtold was successful in convincing the German Government during the detailed discussion of the question which took place in Berlin that the occupation of Mitylene would be a danger to the interests of Austria-Hungary. It was therefore settled by the German and Austrian Governments that they should explain in an amicable manner to the Italian Government that an extension of their operations to the Northern Ægean would be disagreeable to the allies of Italy, and intimating that it would be well to limit those operations to the southern islands of that sea. I am informed from the same source that the Italian Government have given satisfactory assurances to this effect.

[22959] No. 137.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 439.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May 25, 1912.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 200 of the 23rd May, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Beirout, containing memoranda on the various proposals that have been made with regard to the modification of the régime in the Lebanon:—

1. The French Ambassador's programme (which formed the subject of my despatch No. 381 of the 4th instant);
2. The petition of the Medjliss of the Mountain (copy of which was forwarded in my despatch No. 433 of the 22nd instant);
3. Certain recommendations by the committee of the society known as the "Cedars of Lebanon;" and
4. The suggestions of Ibrahim Tabet of Beirout.

Mr. Cumberbatch has been able to send me only one copy of each of the last two papers, and I therefore venture to request that they may be returned to me eventually.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 137.

Consul-General Cumberbatch to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 33. Confidential.)
Sir, *Beirout, May 10, 1912.*

WITH reference to the last part of my despatch No. 60, Secret, of the 9th October, 1911, and to your Excellency's telegrams Nos. 10 and 13 and my telegram No. 21 on the subject of certain stipulations suggested for incorporation in the protocol of the appointment of the new Governor of Lebanon, I have the honour to forward herewith five memoranda containing the remarks I have to make on the following sets of proposals:—

1. Proposals submitted to your Excellency by the French Ambassador, as contained in your Excellency's telegram No. 13 of the 1st instant.
2. Proposals made to the Sublime Porte by the Administrative Council (copy of petition herewith).*
3. Recommendations of the committee of the society called "cèdres du Liban" in a pamphlet, copy of which is enclosed herewith.†
4. Proposed radical "revision" of the "règlement" of the Lebanon by Mr. Ibrahim J. Tabet, copy of which is, I understand, in your Excellency's possession.†
5. Proposal for the abolition of the vice-presidency of the Administrative Council contained in my despatch No. 60 of the 9th October, 1911.

I have, &c.
H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

* See Enclosure in No. 101 † Not printed.

Enclosure 2 in No. 137.

Memorandum No. 1.

Proposals to the French Embassy.

1. "Members of the Administrative Council to be elected by the village sheikhs assisted by their having one delegate for every 100 taxpayers in villages containing over 50 taxpayers. Delegates to be elected on the system in force for second degree elections in Zahlé."

The reasons for a modification of the present mode of election by the village sheikhs were fully given in my despatch No. 89 of the 14th December, 1908, transmitting a draft copy of the "Regulations," and approved by your Excellency in your telegram of the 29th December, 1908. At that time we had not in view a "modification" of the "règlement," which we considered only practicable on the appointment of a new governor, but we hoped to be able to induce the present governor and his council to adopt our project in the form of "instructions" to the sheikhs as to how they should proceed in the elections.

The new French proposals are a radical modification of the "règlement," and I have no objection to make; on the contrary, I think they will meet the requirements of the case still more effectively than our previous project, if they can be carried.

This system of second degree elections was introduced at Zahlé from the very beginning, with the tacit consent of the Powers, and has worked satisfactorily.

Zahlé, as your Excellency is aware, is the largest and most important town of the Lebanon, with a population of about 20,000 inhabitants, chiefly Greek Catholics, and on that account it was considered desirable to introduce the system of secondary elections there in the absence of village sheikhs.

Under the proposed mode of elections, the number of electors of the second degree will be considerably greater than that of the village sheikhs, which will minimise the power of the candidates to purchase the votes.

I would, however, suggest that a proviso should be added to the effect that in the absence of a village sheikh, who under the proposed scheme would represent the first fifty electors of the first degree, these electors should not be deprived of the right to record their vote.

This proviso is necessary owing to the custom prevailing in the Lebanon, especially in the Shouf, by which the elections of village sheikhs are indefinitely postponed under various pretexts in order to prevent a sheikh being elected who is known to be adverse to the sitting member of the Administrative Council for that district contemplating re-election, or to an expectant candidate with friends in power; the difficulties to the sheikh's election being raised either by the sitting member or by the friends of his future opponent, as the case may be.

On the eve of the last elections in the Shouf there was found to be about thirty villages without sheikhs owing to the above-named machinations, and it was only on my strong representations that the posts were filled in time for the elections; otherwise the inhabitants of these villages would have had no part in them.

My suggested addition to the French proposal would read as follows:—

> "If at the time of the elections any post of village sheikh should be vacant, his place as *ex officio* elector of the second degree shall be taken by a delegate to be elected by the first fifty electors of the first degree in the same way as the other delegates elected *ad hoc*."

It would, however, be still better if the village sheikhs were excluded altogether from taking any part in the elections, and their places taken by the delegates elected by the taxpayers, at the proposed rate of a delegate per fifty, but I am afraid that this drastic measure would create a strong protest on the part of the village sheikhs and their protectors.

Another alternative for ensuring the complete record of all the votes held by village sheikhs would be to stipulate that no post of village sheikh should be left vacant at the time of an election.

2. "Deir-el-Kamr to be incorporated with Shouf, forming one electoral district returning one Druse, one Mussulman, and one Maronite to the council."

The object of the French proposal is clearly to strengthen the already preponderant Maronite representation in the Administrative Council, which it has always been the policy of His Majesty's Embassy, as far as I know, to minimise in the interest of other sects.

The Administrative Council is composed of twelve members:—

Maronite	4
Druses	3
Greek Orthodox	2
Greek Catholic	1
Moslem	1
Metuali	1
Total	12

The districts being represented as follows:—

Metn: 1 Maronite, 1 Druse, 1 Greek Orthodox	3
Shouf: 1 Druse, 1 Moslem	2
Djezzin: 1 Maronite, 1 Druse	2
Kesroun: 1 Maronite, 1 Metuali	2
Batroun: 1 Maronite	1
Koura: 1 Greek Catholic	1
Zahlé: 1 Greek Orthodox	1
Total	12

The French proposal, by increasing the Maronite members from four out of twelve to five out of thirteen, would always ensure a Maronite majority, as the Druse and Orthodox members for Metn and the Druse member for Djezzin and the Metuali member for Kesroun owe their election mainly to the Maronite vote, especially in the Metn, and are bound to support their Maronite colleagues, who are thus able to rely on eight votes out of twelve, and would have nine out of thirteen if the fifth Maronite member were admitted. It must also be remembered that the vice-president is always a Maronite, and, although he has no vote, his influence can always be exerted among the members.

It is only owing to the influence of His Majesty's consulate-general on the Maronite and Druse members for the Djezzin, through the head of the important Druse family of the Djumblatt, whose vote counts for a good deal in their election, that the Maronites can be sometimes prevented from having it all their own way in the Administrative Council.

Deir-el-Kamr is a small independent Maronite "Mudiriet" located in the middle of the Druse district of Shouf, with which it was purposely not incorporated administratively owing to the bitter feeling that reigned between Maronites and Druses after the massacres of 1861.

If it is now incorporated with the Shouf for electoral purposes the Druses will protest very strongly, not only against the upsetting of the equilibrium in the representative forces in the Administrative Council, by the admission of another Maronite member, but also because the Maronite vote of Deir-el-Kamr will go to strengthen the existing Maronite vote in the Shouf, and help to bring in Druse and Moslem members submissive to Maronite influence.

On the other hand, I do not think that the Deir-el-Kamr people would relish the idea of their midir being placed under the Druse Kaimakam of Shouf administratively, which would presumably be the natural consequence of the proposed measure.

For the above reasons, I do not consider the French proposal is acceptable in the interest of the minor sects.

3. "Members of the Administrative Council to be suspended and tried only with the consent of the Administrative Council. For common law offences they can be tried by the ordinary courts of the Lebanon, but for offences connected with the elections or official duties, only by the council itself."

This addition to the "règlement" of 1861 has been suggested by the action of Youssouf Pasha in the cases of Shedid Bey Akl, Maronite member for the Metn

(*vide* my despatch No. 16 of the 15th February, 1909), of Georges Zwein, Maronite member for Kesrouan (*vide* my despatch No. 10 of the 18th February, 1910), and of Kalil Akl, Maronite, and Elias Shouéri, Greek Orthodox, members for Metn (*vide* 2nd part of enclosure in my despatch No. 34 of the 20th April, 1911).

In despatch No. 16 of the 15th February, 1909, I showed how, in the absence of any provision in the "règlement" for the treatment of such cases, Youssouf Pasha, after an enquiry into the charges brought against Shedid Akl, decided to act upon the powers conferred upon him in standing visirial instructions on the trial of officials, and suspended him. He acted on the same authority in other cases.

It is now sought to remove this power from the governor, and to transfer it to the very body to which the inculpated member belongs. I have no hesitation in saying that from my experience of the state of things that prevails in the Administrative Council such a course would be fatal to the proper government of the province, and a perusal of my despatch No. 30 of the 15th June, 1910, and the other reports quoted above, will, I am sure, convince your Excellency of the justness of my views.

On the one hand, any member who does not submit to the dictates of the Maronite element in the council would have a case trumped up against him, and he would be first suspended and then committed for trial. If sent before the ordinary courts all the influence of his enemies in the council would be brought to bear on the judges against him, and if sent before the council he would have still less chance of escaping.

Should the accused belong to the Maronite "clique" in the council, they would feel bound to dismiss the charge. For these reasons I consider it better to trust to the impartiality of the governor, and to leave it to him to decide, after an independent enquiry, as to the necessity of suspending a member pending trial before the courts of the province. As a safeguard I would propose that no member should in any case be suspended by the governor without the sanction of the Council of State at Constantinople, to which body the governor must submit the reasons necessitating the suspension pending trial.

I would therefore propose that the article should be amended as follows:—

> "Members of the council against whom grave accusations are made are not to be suspended by the governor pending trial without the consent of the Council of State of the Empire. For common law offences and for offences connected with the elections they must be tried by the ordinary courts of the Lebanon, and for offences connected with their official duties by the Council of State."

I have reason to believe that my French colleague shares my opinion as to the undesirability of extending the powers of the Administrative Council as composed at present, and that he intends his proposal to be dependent upon the acceptation and adoption of the new electoral scheme.

4. "The budget to be prepared in concert with the council."

In the last paragraph of article 2 of the "règlement" of 1861, it is enacted that the Administrative Council shall assess the taxes and control the management of the receipts and expenses, which would presume their having a hand in the preparation of the budget, but, as a matter of fact, until my colleagues of France and Russia and myself pressed in 1908 for a statement on the finances of the Lebanon, in order to enable us to form an opinion as to whether certain additional taxes introduced by the governor were justified by the circumstances, no pretence at preparing, still less at publishing, a budget had been made by the governor in council. The governor declined to furnish us officially with a full budgetary statement, on the grounds there was nothing in the "règlement" authorising him to do so (*vide* my despatches No. 31 of the 18th May and No. 47 of the 14th July, 1908).

In 1909 an attempt was made to prepare a budget, but as it showed an important deficit which caused some stir, another attempt was made in 1910, and a budget showing a very small deficit was prepared and published under the auspices of the Administrative Council (see enclosure in my despatch No. 31 of the 16th June, 1910). Since then no further attempt in that direction has been made.

The conclusion drawn by my two colleagues and myself was that neither of the documents was trustworthy, and that it necessitated a specialist to put the finances into proper order and prepare a correct budget, and that members of the Administrative Council were incompetent in the matter.

I, however, see no objection to the French proposal that a budget compiled in concert with the council should be prepared and published annually for what it is worth.

As a matter of fact, the present governor has always recognsed the rights of the Administrative Council in all financial matters.

5. (*a*.) "Existing taxation to remain in force for the next governor's term, but Government to carry out a new survey and census, and on that basis to prepare a scheme of future taxation, which may, if necessary, include new taxes, and after its approval by the council to submit it three months before the end of his term to the Porte and Powers, who will lay down the lines for the financial arrangements for the following term.

(*b*.) "The Porte's debt to the Lebanon, which has been accumulating since 1878, to be cancelled, and in return the posts and telegraphs to be handed over to the Lebanon.

(*c*.) "Porte also to consent to open ports at Shekka, Jebeil, Junieh, and Batroun for steamers. Customs to belong to the Lebanon, Turkish tariff being applied."

(It will be noticed that I have divided this proposal into three paragraphs for separate treatment.)

Paragraph (*a*) meets with my entire approval and has been several times suggested in my reports, especially in my despatches No. 47 of July 1908, No. 31 of the 16th June, 1910, and No. 60 of the 9th October, 1911, in which the necessity of a new survey and census is explained.

I would, however, suggest that the new scheme to be prepared by the Government of the Lebanon should be submitted to the Sublime Porte six months before the expiration of the new governor's mandate, instead of three, in order to give ample time for its examination, and that, owing to the absence of a single competent person in the Lebanon Government, the Administrative Council should be assisted by a special financial commissioner with a knowledge of Arabic. This would greatly facilitate the Porte and the Powers in laying down the lines of the future financial arrangements.

Paragraph (*b*).—In the absence of reliable financial statistics it is difficult to state what the debt of the Porte to the Lebanon amounts to, but whatever it may be, it would certainly be worth while to the Lebanon to give it up in return for the posts and telegraphs which will be better managed by the Lebanon Government than they are under the Turkish administration.

If, as I fear, the Porte does not agree to handing over these two branches of their administration, it would only be just that in return for giving up the debt accrued since 1878, under the provisions of article 15, second paragraph, of the "règlement" of 1864, the Porte should formally renounce all claim to any surplus that might accrue through the new scheme which under article 15, first paragraph of the "règlement," it has a right to take, but which has also practically remained a dead letter.

Paragraph (*c*).—The just demand of the Lebanese for the opening of their ports to steamers has been the subject of correspondence with His Majesty's Embassy (*vide* your Excellency's despatches of the 24th July and of the 29th August, 1909, and of the 12th March, 1910, and my No. 58 of the 16th August and No. 68 of the 5th October, 1909, and No. 19 of the 28th March, 1910).

I have no reason to change my opinion as to the justness of this claim, the Porte's opposition to which on the grounds that the escape of deserters from military service and the running of arms and ammunition would be facilitated is unjustified, as the Lebanon authorities can be fully relied on to take the necessary preventative measures.

I also consider that the customs dues levied at the above-named ports, on the Turkish tariff under Imperial inspectors, should belong to the Lebanon, except of course those levied on goods in transit to places outside the Lebanon. I have reasons to think that, for the present at least, the Lebanese would be satisfied with the raising of the prohibition against steamers, which they think would give an impetus to the trade of their ports, and above all save emigrants from the voraciousness of the so-called "Emigration Agencies" in Beirout and Tripoli, at which ports they are now obliged to embark.

6. "Judicial administration to be in accordance with the protocol ('règlement') of 1864.

"Commercial cases to which foreigners are parties to be tried in the Commercial Court at Beirout (unless foreigners prefer Lebanon courts) with appeal to the higher Judicial Court of the Lebanon.

"No appeal in cassation from any decision of the last-named court."

The wording of this article is obviously incomplete, but from the list sent to the embassy by my French colleague, of which he has furnished me with a copy, I find it runs as follows:—

"L'organisation judiciaire étant établie comme il est indiqué au protocole de 1864, les tribunaux libanais jugeront en matière commerciale lorsque les parties en cause seront libanaises. Lorsqu'un ou plusieurs étrangers seront intéressés à une affaire de cette nature, le tribunal de commerce de Beyrouth continuera à être seul compétent, à moins que ces étrangers n'acceptent la juridiction du tribunal libanais. L'appel de ces jugements du tribunal de commerce à Beyrouth sera porté au medjliss judiciaire supérieur du Liban. Les tribunaux libanais ayant été institués pour que la justice soit rendue d'après les coutumes locales, les sentences du medjliss supérieur ne seront susceptibles en aucune manière de recours en cassation."

As is explained in Mr. Young's "Corps de Droit Ottoman," vol. i, p. 144, footnote 15, the judicial organisation established by the "règlement" of 1864 was modified by its partial assimilation to the judicial organisation of the Empire. Daoud Pasha was the first governor to introduce the Turkish organisation, but I am given to understand that other modifications of the Lebanon system based on the Turkish laws were subsequently introduced, so that at the present moment the judicial organisation of the Lebanon practically consists of a mixture of two systems.

Though, as stated by Mr. Young, the Powers have accepted the changes, the articles of the "règlement" bearing upon this point have never been formally modified in any subsequent protocol; on the contrary, the protocol of investiture of 1892 refers to them as having been re-established, and the same reminder is repeated in subsequent protocols. Young explains this anomaly as due to inadvertence at the time of drafting the protocols.

Taking Young's statement as authoritative, and in view of the general opinion prevailing that the assimilation of the general judicial system of the Empire has proved satisfactory, the first words of the French article, by which it is assumed that the judicial organisation of the "règlement" of 1864 has been re-established, are incomprehensible, and I believe that my French colleague shares my view that the present system, which is a mixture of both, must be upheld, but that it would be an advantage to have this formally recognised in the new governor's protocol of investiture.

M. Couget agrees with me that it should also be stipulated that a commission should be appointed by the next governor to establish what portions of the Ottoman judicial organisation have been introduced into the organisation prescribed by the "protocol" of 1864, and what portions of the latter have been abolished, with a view to embodying the results in a subsequent governor's protocol of investiture as the recognised judicial system of the Lebanon.

To the second part of the French proposal which concerns the establishment of commercial courts in the Lebanon I have no objection to make.

Article 9 of the "règlement" of 1864 provides that all commercial cases must be tried in Beirout in the Commercial Court.

In paragraph 1. of the pamphlet containing the demands of the "Comité des cédres du Liban," treated in my memorandum No. 3, the project is more clearly and fully stated. But in my opinion, and in that of my French colleague, appeals from the proposed commercial courts should go before the Civil Court of Appeal of the Lebanon sitting as a Commercial Court, and cases where foreigners are interested should still go before the Commercial Court at Beirout as heretofore, with appeal to Constantinople.

The text of this article should consequently be as follows:—

"The courts of first instance in the Lebanon shall be competent to hear commercial cases, except where a foreigner is a party, with appeal to the Civil Court of Appeal of the Lebanon sitting as a Commercial Court.

"Commercial cases between foreigners or foreign-protected persons and inhabitants of the Lebanon shall continue to be tried under the provisions of article 9 of the "règlement" of 1864, unless the foreign or protected person submits to the jurisdiction of the Lebanese courts."

The third portion of this French proposal, withdrawing the right of appeal to the Court of Cassation (Constantinople) also, by its mention of a superior judicial council which does not exist in the Lebanon, but has been replaced by a civil and criminal court of appeal, presupposes the maintenance of the judicial organisation of the "règlement" of 1864, and it would be unwise and irrational to disallow appeals in cassation especially from the Criminal Court of Appeal in Lebanon.

The whole of this article has been carelessly drawn up, but in his notes accompanying it, I think it will be found that my colleague explains his views much on the same lines as my remarks.

7. "Militia to be raised to 1,200 under foreign reorganising officer."

I entirely agree with this proposal, and I have frequently pressed upon Youssouf Pasha and the commandant of the militia the idea of securing the services of one of the foreign officers engaged in the reformation of the Imperial gendarmerie, and I discussed the feasibility of the undertaking with Major Nye when he was stationed in this district.

As, however, the duties of the foreign officers in Turkey have been altered to those of inspectors instead of instructors as heretofore, I anticipate the usual objections of the Sublime Porte to a foreign officer, in which case an officer of the Ottoman army with a knowledge of Arabic would be better than that the militia should be left in its present untrained and undisciplined state.

The question of numbers is purely a matter of finance, as is shown in that part of my despatch No. 60 of the 9th October, 1911, dealing with this subject. According to article 11 of the "règlement," there should be about seven men for each 1,000 inhabitants. As Young states in his footnote No. 19 on p. 147 of vol. i of the "Corps du Droit ottoman," the strength in 1861 was fixed at 1,000 men, being seven per 1,000 of a total population estimated at 200,000 by doubling the number of male adults fixed at 99,834 by the census of 1861.

It is generally estimated that the total population is now over 300,000, which, if the "règlement" is strictly adhered to, would mean a force of 2,100 men, which, even with the small pay of £ T. 1½ or £ T. 2 per month, would involve greater expenditure than the finances would support.

Under these circumstances, I consider that as a probable result of compelling the governor to keep the force up to strength of 1,200 men (all told) a reduction of pay has to be made, the results will be a deterioration in the quality of the material available, and that consequently it might be deemed preferable to agree in principle to the maintenance of a force of 1,200 men, all told, but to postpone the enforcement of the measure till the results of the proposed new financial scheme are known, in order to see whether the budget can afford the increase of 250 men it will entail to bring the present number (950) up to 1,200.

Enclosure 3 in No. 137.

Memorandum No. 2.

Proposals of Administrative Council.

THE Administrative Council has addressed a petition direct to the Sublime Porte asking for the following "reforms." Youssouf Pasha having refused to transmit it on the pretext that it forms no part of the duties of a governor to transmit a document dealing with modifications of a "règlement organique" he has been appointed to enforce.

I have not yet been able to obtain an exact copy of the document forwarded to Constantinople, but the following is a summary of the reforms asked for (see note at end):—

1. An increase of the taxes by £ T. 25,000 to provide higher salaries.

2. The institution of a special "commercial" court in the Lebanon, or power given to the civil courts to form themselves into commercial courts.

3. The opening of the ports of the Lebanon to steamers.

4. Exemption from military service in the Imperial army of Lebanese domiciled in the vilayets, but whose status of Lebanese is confirmed by certificates delivered by the Lebanese Government, and who continue to pay taxes in the Lebanon.

5. The suspension by the governor of a member of the Administrative Council or of a judge to be dependent upon a preliminary enquiry and a decision of the Administrative Council.

6. The enquiry into complaints against a judge to be instituted by the Administrative Council, which will decide what punishment, if any, he deserves.

1. Increase of taxes.

This point has been fully dealt with under paragraph 5 of my memorandum No. 1.

2. Commercial Court.

This point has been fully dealt with under paragraph 6 of my memorandum No. 1.

3. Opening of ports.

This point has been been dealt with in my memorandum No. 1, paragraph 5, sub-paragraph (c).

4. Exemption from military service.

This question has been fully explained in the last half of my despatch No. 18 of the 25th March, 1910, in which I pointed out the necessity of a clear and precise definition of the Sublime Porte's decision as to how a Lebanese residing in a vilayet of the Empire is considered to have forfeited his rights to exemption from the Ottoman recruiting law, and I think the present opportunity is a good one to dispose of the question once and for all, by the insertion in the new governor's protocol of investiture of a special paragraph in the required sense, as explained in my above-mentioned despatch.

5. Suspension of the members of the Administrative Council and judges.

This question as concerns the members of the council has been dealt with in my memorandum No. 1 under paragraph 3.

As concerns judges, similar reasons exist for its inexpediency; besides which no case has occurred to my knowledge in which a judge has been suspended pending enquiry.

The course to be followed in the case of incriminated judges is clearly laid out in the "règlement" of 1864, as I will explain under the next heading.

The insertion of this demand in the protocol of the new governor would be taken as an admission of a power to suspend a judge during enquiry which does not exist at present, and if accorded to the Administrative Council would be abused for personal motives, and the judges would be more than ever under the influence of the members of the Administrative Council for purposes not always connected with the administration of justice.

Article 11 of the "règlement" provides for an enquiry being instituted preliminary to a judge's removal and punishment, but it does not say by whom the enquiry is to be made.

In the protocol of 1892 it was prescribed that the enquiry should be made by the Administrative Council, and this injunction was repeated in subsequent protocols. It is, however, the governor who decides whether the enquiry should take place, and he reserves to himself the right to decide whether the evidence brought before the Court of Enquiry justifies the removal of the judge to another court or his dismissal.

By their present demand the Administrative Council wish in addition to their right to institute the enquiry to acquire also the power of deciding the innocence or culpability of the judge, and the governor should be bound to carry out their decision whatever it may be.

Owing to the little reliance that can be placed in the impartiality of the members of the Administrative Council as at present constituted I do not think it advisable to support this demand, my reasons being based on one or two cases where judges

have been the victims of the vindictiveness of members of the Administrative Council or of personal enemies through these members, necessitating a refusal on the part of the governor to act on their recommendations.

In this matter too, I think, it would be better to leave the final decision with the governor, and to trust to his sense of justice to act as the real merits of the case demand.

In course of time, when, as it is to be hoped, men of irreproachable conduct and of greater competence in public affairs are available as members of the Administrative Council, this proposed enlargement of their administrative powers might be advantageously considered.

Note.—A copy of the Administrative Council's petition having been privately furnished to me at the last moment, a translation is [? not] annexed to this memorandum.

[Memoranda Nos. 3 and 4 not printed.]

Enclosure 4 in No. 137.

Memorandum No. 5.

Vice-Presidency of the Administrative Council.

The "règlement" of 1864 does not provide for the post of vice-president of the Administrative Council, but, as stated in note 4, p. 141 of vol. I of Young's "Corps du Droit ottoman," this post was created in favour of a Maronite by Daoud Pasha. In Rustem Pasha's time (1873–1883) an unsuccessful attempt was made to abolish it by the Russian Embassy, but as no reference was made to this irregularity it is to be presumed that it has been tacitly accepted, in which case I would suggest the advisability of an article to that effect in the new governor's protocol of investiture, but with the addition that the post carries no vote with it, as is the case.

I am in favour of the oft-expressed desire of the Druses and other minor sects that the post should be abolished as an expensive sinecure, and as increasing the already preponderating Maronite influence, but my French colleague, though he may admit its uselessness for purposes of general interest, would not care to propose it in view of the strong outcry that would be raised by the Maronites for the loss to their side of the best-paid post in the Lebanon.

The unimportance of the public duties it carries with it has been clearly shown by the absence for many months of the present holder, Mir Kabelan Bellamah, owing to his temporary suspension by the governor pending certain legal proceedings against him on the unfounded charge of using an insulting expression concerning the Sultan, and his purely nominal duties have been satisfactorily performed by the senior Maronite member of the council.

I would prefer to see the post done away with and the governor made to preside at every sitting of the council in person, as is done by the valis in the rest of the Empire, and is prescribed in article 1 of the "règlement" of 1861, so that every matter brought before the council should be discussed openly before him.

This matter is, however, of very minor importance compared to the other demands.

[22988]

No. 138.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received May 30.*)

Sir,

India Office, May 28, 1912.

WITH reference to the letter of this Office, dated the 29th February last, enclosing, with other papers, copy of a telegram of the Government of India, dated the 25th February, 1912, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to enclose, for

the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a further telegram from the Government of India recommending the immediate provision of two dioptric lanterns for the residency at Bushire.

In view of the urgency of the matter, the Marquess of Crewe has sanctioned the recommendation in the telegram, copy of which is herewith transmitted. The cost of the two lanterns, delivered in London, is estimated in this Office at approximately 124*l.* initial expenditure, plus 2½ per cent. for the usual Trinity House charges for inspection, &c., and the annual recurring expenditure in respect of the lanterns is estimated at 24*l.* Sanction has been accorded to this expenditure on the understanding that the expenditure will be met by savings from the total expenditure* on the complete scheme of lighting and buoyage in the Persian Gulf.

As regards the final sentence of the telegram of the Government of India, I am to suggest, for Sir E. Grey's consideration, that, as soon as the lanterns to be provided have been installed, the Russian Government should be moved to discontinue the Russian lights. It would appear preferable not to address them till serviceable lights are in working order, since, otherwise, retort might be made that the Russian lights were meeting a want that was unprovided for.

Copy of this letter has been communicated to the Admiralty.

I am, &c.

LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

Enclosure 1 in No. 138.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *May* 13, 1912.

BUSHIRE lights: See my telegram dated 25th February, 1912.

Lights at Russian consulate are reported by admiral to be visible for upwards of 12 miles. Admiral states that the "Alert" anchored on night of 16th ultimo, thinking lights were on British consulate, but on the next day found herself south of her supposed position. There is danger to shipping, as no notice regarding Russian lights has so far been published. Recommendation is made by admiral that two lanterns, similar to those at Koweit, one showing white light and the other red, should be sent for Bushire residency at once. Resident, Persian Gulf, concurs in proposal, which has my approval. Resident asks that, as in the case of Koweit, India Office Store Department should send dioptric lanterns at once to Bushire. Rupees 946 : 8 is cost, exclusive of freight, of each lantern; there will also be following recurring charges:—watchman, 10 rupees per mensem; oil, 5 rupees per mensem. It is presumed that Treasury will be asked to defray half the cost. I am further of opinion that Russian Government should be at once addressed with a view to Russian consul at Bushire being directed to discontinue lights, as lighting of Gulf is now no concern of Russia.

Enclosure 2 in No. 138.

The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, May* 27, 1912.

BUSHIRE lanterns: Please see your telegram dated 13th instant.

We are considering question of communication to Russian Government. On the understanding that expenditure will be met by savings from total expenditure on complete scheme of lighting and buoyage (see letter dated 25th January last to Foreign Office), steps are being taken for supply here of lanterns in about four weeks.

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* Initial, 102,400*l.*; annual recurring, 7,700*l.* *Vide* letter of India Office to Foreign Office, January 25, 1912.

[22990] No. 139.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 30.)

Sir, *India Office, May* 28, 1912.

WITH reference to your letter, dated the 14th March last, regarding the proposed erection of a lighthouse on the island of Sheikh Shuaib, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to enclose, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of correspondence that has taken place regarding this and other proposed lights in the Persian Gulf.

Apart from the Sheikh Shuaib light, it will be seen that the Government of India are not of opinion that any mention need be made to the Persian Government of other items in the lighting and buoyage scheme, nor do they consider that the time has come to make any communications regarding such items to any of the local chiefs. The Marquess of Crewe coneurs in these views, as well as in the proposal to refrain from hoisting the flag on Little Quoin. He would only observe that the commencement of building operations on that island will serve, equally with the hoisting of a flag, as evidence of British occupancy.

As regards Sheikh Shuaib, it does not appear from the telegram of the Government of India that they have as yet decided as to the feasibility of another light as alternative to that proposed on the island named.

Subject to the concurrence of Secretary Sir E. Grey, the Marquess of Crewe would propose to address to them the telegram, of which a draft is herewith forwarded.

I am, &c.

LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

Enclosure 1 in No. 139.

The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India.

My Lord, *India Office, March* 22, 1912.

IN the telegram of your Excellency's Government, dated the 27th April, 1911, attention was drawn to the fact that it would be necessary to approach the Persian Government in connection with the proposal to place a lighthouse on Sheikh Shuaib Island. I enclose, for your information, copy of correspondence with His Majesty's Minister at Tehran upon the subject, and request that I may receive your observations by telegraph on the memorandum handed to Sir G. Barclay on the 8th February last, and in particular on the effect, if any, upon our position locally, if we appear to be acting as the delegate of Persia and no longer on our own account as the Power which has hitherto made itself responsible for the safe navigation of the Gulf.

2. It is also for consideration whether, in replying to the Persian memorandum, any mention should be made of other items in the scheme (copy enclosed*), such as the fact that it is proposed to lay buoys at Jask (item No. 1 in the list), Bunder Abbas (Nos. 3 and 4), and Bushire (Nos. 7 and 8); and, as regards the lighthouses at Musandam (No. 2), and Tamb Island (No. 5), and the buoys at Bahrein (Nos. 11 to 13), I should be glad to learn whether you contemplate obtaining any formal authority, either now or later, from the local chiefs for the establishment of lights and buoys, and for the levy of light dues at some future time if thought desirable. The position as regards dues will become clearer, *vis-à-vis* of Turkey, if negotiations which are about to be begun on the basis of the British memorandum of the 20th July last (extract enclosed*) should be successfully concluded. The extract, so far as it relates to the Shatt-el-Arab, covers the case of the light-vessel (item No. 9) and the lighted buoy (No. 10) which it is proposed to establish in that locality.

3. As your Excellency is aware from the papers forwarded in recent letters from the Secretary, Political Department of this Office, correspondence is proceeding separately on the question of the plant required for the provision of the lights and buoys.

I have, &c.

CREWE.

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* Not printed.

Enclosure 2 in No. 139.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Mr. Grant.

(Confidential.)
Dear Mr. Grant, *Fao, April 22, 1912.*

I AM to-day having sent you the following telegram:—

"(Demi-official.)

"Have framed my views on subject of India Office letter, dated the 22nd March, in the form of a telegram, but as it is of considerable length I have posted copy, which will reach you on 29th instant. If that is not soon enough, please instruct First Assistant to telegraph it."

I enclose a copy of the draft telegram in question explaining my views.

Yours sincerely,
P. Z. COX.

Enclosure 3 in No. 139.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) *April 19, 1912.*

I SUBMIT following observations on India Office letter, dated the 22nd March, and enclosures:—

1. Speaking from the purely local point of view, I am of opinion that as long as the lighthouse is built, manned, and managed by us, our position will not be affected locally to any appreciable extent by our acting as the delegate of Persia, but please see my subsequent observations from international standpoint.

2. I am of opinion that no mention need be made to the Persian Government of our intentions regarding the buoyage of Jask, Bunder Abbas, or Bushire. They have not interested themselves in our buoyage of these places in the past, and if they raise any question now we should tell them that we are merely improving the buoyage facilities which we have afforded in the past, and which has never been questioned by themselves or anybody else.

3. I consider that we should make no communication to the Persian Government in respect of our intentions in regard to Musandam, Tamb, or Bahrein.

4. As regards light on Little Quoin, as it is well outside territorial waters, no communication to anybody appears to be called for or advisable. In this connection it is of course extremely unlikely that any Power would think of hoisting their flag there, and we should not tolerate it if they did, but if that conceivable contingency cannot be altogether dismissed it is a matter for lively consideration whether we had not better hoist our flag previous to commencement of building operations. In any case, we should certainly commence with this item.

5. As regards Tamb, when we are ready to deposit building material, we should inform Sheikh of Shargah, and, if necessary, recognise his territorial rights by payment of nominal ground-rent.

6. As regards Bahrein, no communication to sheikh seems necessary. He has never been consulted in regard to existing buoys.

7. No question of levy of dues should be broached to Shargah or Bahrein, at all events for the present.

8. The terms of the Persian memorandum appear to me to be impossible of acceptance. If in spite of their attitude we decide that it is still necessary to proceed with this item, then I am of opinion that we should reply to Persian Government that if they will give us a document formally recognising our privileged position in regard to the lighting of the Gulf and entrusting to us on their behalf the management of aids to navigation in their territorial waters in perpetuity, or for a long period of years; and if they will pay for the said lighthouse and agree to drop all question of the levy of dues until we advise them to raise it, then we agree to fly the Persian flag in this and all cases where they stand the cost, and would be prepared to advance the cost of erection pending settlement of the question of the levy of dues. If they make difficulty over this then I think we should address them a communication calculated to hang up the matter (but leaving the refusal with us), and then consider whether we cannot avoid this item altogether.

With regard to all other items of present scheme, we are in a strong position for maintaining it as a wholly British enterprise, so that it would be a pity to weaken our position as well as introduce a complicating element in connection with eventual levy of light dues by allowing Persia to participate in regard to this one item, except under the safeguards above indicated. As a possible means of avoiding this complication, I venture to suggest for consideration whether it would not be feasible and serve our purpose, and that of navigation equally well, if, instead of lighthouse on Sheikh Shuaib, we placed a light-ship with a 20- or 25-mile light on the Shah Allum shoal. Apparently this would not only be equally useful to ships passing up and down Gulf, but would also serve vessels crossing from Lingah to Bahrein.

When we had put up our light-ship we could inform Persian Government that we had thought better to the lighthouse previously discussed.

Enclosure 4 in No. 139.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *May 21, 1912.*

PERSIAN Gulf lights. Reply to first paragraph of your despatch of the 22nd March last will be sent later.

As regards second paragraph, reference is invited to letter dated the 22nd ultimo from Resident, Persian Gulf, forwarded with letter, dated the 2nd instant, from Secretary to Government of India, Foreign Department. Except as regards hoisting of flag on Little Quoin, which appears unnecessary at present, resident's observations in draft telegram of the 19th April have my concurrence.

[23065] No. 140.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 70.)
(Telegraphic.) *Rome, May 30, 1912.*

WHILE Italy is not likely to make any announcement calculated to diminish Turkish apprehensions, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has told Swedish Minister that there were reasons which made it highly improbable that she would extend operations to Lesbos or northern Ægean islands.

[23112] No. 141.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 232.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 30, 1912.*

THE Italian Government have drawn the attention of the Russian Government to the present abnormal position of Samos, and have pointed out that there is a considerable Turkish garrison there and a depôt of munitions of war. The Italian Government recognise that the island is under the special protection of France, Russia, and Great Britain, and that, therefore, no Turkish Garrison should be there.

Please ascertain if Italian Government or Russian Government have made any communication to French Government, as I should like to have views of M. Poincaré as to M. Sazonof's proposal that the three Powers should lay before the Turkish Government the alternative of withdrawing the garrison, and thereby re-establishing a normal state of things, or of allowing Italy a free hand to deal with the island as she thought fit.

[23112] No. 142.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 233.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, May 30, 1912.*

THE Italian Government have drawn the attention of the Russian Government to the present abnormal position of Samos, and have pointed out that there is a considerable Turkish garrison there and a depôt of munitions of war. The Italian Government

recognise that the island is under the special protection of France, Russia, and Great Britain, and that therefore no Turkish garrison should be there.

Please ascertain if Italian Government or Russian Government have made any communication to French Government, as I should like to have views of M. Poincaré as to M. Sazonof's proposal that the three Powers should lay before the Turkish Government the alternative of withdrawing the garrison and thereby re-establishing a normal state of things, or of allowing Italy a free hand to deal with the island as she thought fit.

[21766] No. 143.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Foreign Office, May 30, 1912.

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter P. 1858 of the 21st instant on the subject of the Bagdad railway and connected questions.

Sir E. Grey has read this letter with surprise, which a perusal of former correspondence has merely served to increase: In the course of last summer lengthy discussions took place between the departments concerned respecting the reply to be sent to the Turkish Ambassador respecting the Bagdad railway and cognate matters; and, as a result of these discussions, a telegram dated the 13th July, 1911, was dispatched to the Viceroy informing him of the nature of the proposed reply, and, on the 16th July, his Excellency telegraphed that the proposals "seem satisfactory on the whole and a great advance on those made hitherto," and, in particular, he stated that the proposed distribution of capital in the Bagdad-Bussorah section of the railway might on certain conditions be accepted; copies of these telegrams were communicated by the Marquess of Crewe to Sir E. Grey, and it was intimated at the same time that the India Office would furnish an expression of opinion; a letter dated the 18th July, 1911 was hereupon written by Sir A. Hirtzel, in which he stated "I understand that Lord Crewe has spoken to Sir E. Grey about this, and my instructions are to send you the enclosed copy of the Foreign Office memorandum with his Lordship's suggested alterations shown in manuscript," all the suggested alterations were incorporated in this document, which was the draft of the proposed reply to the Turkish Ambassador, in so far as it related to the Bagdad railway, and it was not until that reply had been submitted to Lord Crewe and initialled by his Lordship that it was dispatched. Such being the sequence of events, Sir E. Grey learns with regret, nine months after the reply has been dispatched and its substance communicated to the French, Russian, and German Governments—an interval during which no intimation of his Lordship's change of attitude has reached Sir E. Grey—that Lord Crewe has so far modified his attitude as to regard the distribution of capital proposed as "wholly unacceptable and even dangerous."

Sir E. Grey is unaware of the reasons which have led Lord Crewe to modify his views to so serious an extent as is implied by his letter under reply; but he must point out the very grave objections which exist to withdrawing the offer formally made to the Ottoman Government, after such long and serious consideration, after the lapse of so many months, and at a moment when the Turkish Ambassador has been instructed to discuss the proposals in the most friendly and accommodating spirit. His Majesty's Government are, in Sir E. Grey's opinion, in honour committed to those proposals, and they must at any rate await their definite rejection before recommencing negotiations on a totally different basis, negotiations which, it must be remembered, failed on a previous occasion. The reply of the Turkish Ambassador is by no means of a character to warrant so subversive a departure from the rules of diplomatic procedure as a refusal to continue the negotiations would imply; for to demand a participation of 50 per cent. or 60 per cent. at this late stage of the proceedings would be tantamount to open rupture, and would cause great disappointment and apprehension at Constantinople. Moreover, preliminary negotiations with France, Russia, and Germany would be necessary, unless indeed Germany consented at once to forego any share at all in the Bagdad-Bussorah sections, which, in Sir E. Grey's opinion, it would be as unreasonable to ask as it would be difficult to obtain.

Assuming that France and Russia were asked to renounce their shares and were

excluded, a long and difficult negotiation with Germany would ensue, and a heavy price would have to be paid for her renunciation of a share equal to that of any other foreign Power; and assuming further that a successful issue were reached, Sir E. Grey apprehends that it is not probable that the resumption of negotiations with the Ottoman Government would be facilitated, as they would deeply resent the discontinuance of the present discussion, and the initiation of negotiations between two Powers, England and Germany, one of whom has largely renounced her claims in return for a substantial *quid pro quo*, the other of whom does not possess any legal claim at all in those regions.

The Ottoman Government, through the Turkish Ambassador in London, have requested that no negotiations or discussion in connection with the Bagdad railway should be conducted with the German Government, and His Highness was assured that no such procedure was contemplated.

It was in consequence of the inability of His Majesty's Government to obtain a 50 per cent. participation for British interests that the proposals now before the Ottoman Government were made; and Sir E. Grey thinks that one of the reasons then advanced for being satisfied with a smaller participation has been overlooked in your letter under reply. If it be granted that His Majesty's Government can only protect British and Indian trade against adverse treatment by securing a participation of 50 per cent., how are they then to avoid such adverse treatment on other parts of the railway, *e.g.*, on the branch to Khanikin, and if adverse treatment exists on that and other portions of the railway, the utility of securing equality of treatment on the Bagdad-Bussorah sections is not so apparent?

In Sir E. Grey's view, which, until the receipt of your letter under reply, he believed to be shared by your department, the most efficacious means of excluding differential treatment (not only on the Bagdad-Bussorah sections but on all railways in Asiatic Turkey) is by a binding international agreement on the subject, and by making the continued levy of the increased customs duty dependent on the precise observance of that instrument.

For these reasons Sir E. Grey hopes that the Marquess of Crewe will reconsider his views and allow the negotiations with the Turkish Ambassador to proceed on the basis of the proposals formally made to the Ottoman Government in July 1911.

Sir E. Grey would remind Lord Crewe that his Excellency is anxious to discuss those proposals at an early date, and he thinks that a preliminary discussion between the departments concerned should take place as soon as possible.

As regards the Peninsula of El Katr, Sir E. Grey naturally attaches the greatest weight to the views of the Marquess of Crewe, and although he is disposed to think that his Lordship's conclusions as to the result of conceding something to Turkey in this region are exaggerated, he does not think it necessary to continue at this stage the discussion on this point, as he would be averse from abating any of the demands advanced in the memorandum of the 29th July, 1911, for the present; he would, however, be glad if Lord Crewe would consider at his leisure in what direction it might be possible to make a concession to the Ottoman Government supposing a successful issue of the negotiations depended upon some modification of our extreme demands. If it were worth while to initiate these negotiations, it is worth while to continue them in a reasonable spirit.

As to Mohammerah, Sir E. Grey does not consider it practicable to propose to the Persian Government that they should make a communication as proposed to the Turkish Government, or that His Majesty's Government should support Persia against Turkey in the manner suggested; Sir E. Grey does not consider that it would be possible to reserve this question from The Hague Tribunal if the Turkish Government persisted in such a reference; but, if it is possible to prevent it, Sir E. Grey has no intention of allowing it, and proposes to treat a settlement of this frontier as part of the present negotiations and as a necessary condition of their conclusion.

A separate letter will be addressed to you shortly respecting the course which it is proposed to pursue in regard to the Mohammerah frontier negotiations.

I am, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[23138] No. 144.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 31.)

Sir, *India Office, May 30, 1912.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Government of India regarding the appointment of a Turkish clerk at the land registration office at Koweit.

The facts are not very clearly stated, and it does not appear whether the land registration office is already in existence, or is itself a new creation. In any case it would seem that some assertion of Turkish sovereignty, and consequently some alteration of the *status quo*, is involved; and it is for consideration whether it should not be pointed out in a friendly manner to the Turkish Ambassador that acts of this kind on the part of the local authorities, while the whole question is under discussion between the two Governments, cannot fail to produce an unfavourable impression and prejudice the result of the negotiations.

I am, &c.
LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

Enclosure in No. 144.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *May 26, 1912.*

WE repeat for such action as His Majesty's Government may think fit the following telegram from Sir P. Cox regarding Koweit ("Tapoo" means a land registration office):—

"Consul at Bussorah telegraphed 18th instant to following effect:—'Mention is made in annual budget of Bussorah tapoo office that clerk of Koweit tapoo office has been assigned a salary of 300 piastres per mensem.'

"This only affords another instance of the Turkish Government's persevering attempts to make points affecting *status quo* their favourite move during progress of negotiations with us. Like the Mudirates at Wakra, &c., the appointment is probably a paper one; but besides being new, it is a disturbance of *status quo* of an original character [?], and His Majesty's Government will I presume be asked to make an immediate protest, and to demand that, as matter is mentioned in a public document, it should be officially disavowed."

[23068] No. 145.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 31.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the British Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Viceroy, dated the 29th May, relative to the proposed Shatt-el-Arab Riverain Commission.

India Office, May 30, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 145.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *May 29, 1912.*

I HAVE just received draft convention for Riverain Commission on Shatt-el-Arab, and submit following comments thereon:—

Originally idea of commission was mooted merely as a means of composing our dispute with Turks re. to buoyage of bar in a convenient manner. It was then

generally recognised that introduction of any international element besides river Power or Powers and ourselves would be dangerous. As first presented by His Majesty's Government to the Porte, proposal was that "all matters pertaining to navigation and the requisite periodical surveys" should be superintended by the commission. In Turkish Government's reply expressing concurrence the above simple limits of scope of commission were still observed, except that inclusion of quarantine, which obviously must in any case be eliminated, was proposed by the Turks.

But scope of commission is greatly extended by convention as now drafted, which contemplates that not only superintendence, but also improvement of approaches to river, presumably by dredging the bar, and construction of docks and wharves, besides levy of dues to recoup themselves for such outlay, should be undertaken by the commission.

The inclusion of levy of dues seems to introduce into convention that international leaven which we are so anxious to exclude, as it involves intimation to foreign Powers and discussion of possible objections on their part.

On the supposition that adequate voice is obtained by us in management of section of railway between Bussorah and Bagdad, I venture to suggest, as calculated to obviate or discount the above difficulty, the following course:—

Article 23 of Bagdad Railway Convention, which will presumably be reproduced in new convention for Bussorah section, already provides for construction of docks and wharves. Could not this article be so worded as to cover eventual dredging of bar, and recovery of cost through railway tariff under the article? In the event of this arrangement being possible, it would leave such inexpensive services for Riverain Commission that levy of pilotage would sufficiently cover them. Even pilotage I would almost be inclined to dispense with, and would suggest that it might sufficiently satisfy *amour-propre* of Turks if they required annual licence fees to be paid by the private pilots at present plying on the river.

In event of course being adopted, duties of commission in regard to projects involving large capital expenditure would, in that case (?), so far as they affected navigation, be limited to eventual superintendence, and their functions would for the rest be confined to what it was originally contemplated that they should carry out. There would then be no need for (? word omitted) or communication to other Powers.

Following modifications of draft convention would be involved by adoption of above course:—

Omission in article 12 of word "publish," and insertion in its place of words "furnish to the high contracting parties"; omission of articles 8 and 9, and of items (*a*) and (*b*) of article 6.

It would also involve omission of all references, wherever they occurred, to police and quarantine. Duties of policing river, in which suppression of piracy must be included, ought rather to fall, as at present, to local authorities. There are obvious objections to inclusion of quarantine.

(Repeated to Secretary of State.)

[22934] No. 146.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 31, 1912.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo, forwarding telegraphic correspondence on the subject of the Shatt-el-Arab, and the draft of a telegram which, subject to the concurrence of Sir E. Grey, the Secretary of State for India proposes to dispatch to the Government of India.

As regards the first point in this draft telegram, Sir E. Grey is advised that under normal conditions there is no doubt a presumption that each riparian owner owns on his side of the river *usque ad medium filum aquæ*, but that, in the present case, that presumption has by implication undoubtedly been swept away by the terms of the Treaty of Erzeroum (1847), the effect of which was to give Turkey the whole waterway.

PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE LONDON

He would accordingly suggest that there should be substituted for the words "we are inclined to believe" the words "we consider, for the reasons given on pp. 40–43 of Mr. Parker's memorandum."

As regards point (2), Sir E. Grey is inclined to agree that the arrangement of 1848 was only a "self-denying ordinance" on the part of Turkey and Persia. The memorandum presented to the Ottoman Government in 1887 and 1888 based the protest of Great Britain against the erection of fortifications at Fao on the grounds that they both constituted a menace to commerce and were inconsistent with the arrangement of 1848. Sir E. Grey considers, as at present advised, that the Turkish answer was sound in law, so far as the arrangement of 1848 was concerned.

It is clear that Turkey in 1888 admitted the right of Persia (apart from the self-denying ordinance) to fortify the left bank, but Sir E. Grey is advised that the building of forts on the left or Persian bank of the Shatt-el-Arab would not affect the provisions of the Treaty of Erzeroum, or Turkey's rights to the waterway thereunder. The right of Persia to fortify (apart from the self-denying ordinance) flows from the fact that the left bank belongs to Persia, and does not imply ownership of any part of the waterway.

Sir E. Grey would therefore suggest that point (2) should be amplified accordingly.

He agrees with point (3).

As to point (4), he is advised that it is doubtful whether article 2 of the Treaty of Erzeroum confers the right of navigation by Persian war-ships. Such navigation appears rather to be one of the practices pursued by Persia, but not justified by the strict law applicable.

He agrees with point (5); and he considers that there is no reason for the conclusion that such a categorical statement would have been made by Sir S. Canning on insufficient evidence.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[22191] No. 147.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Foreign Office, May 31, 1912.

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 23rd and 24th May, in which you forward two telegrams, dated the 23rd May, from the British resident in the Persian Gulf respecting the frontier in the neighbourhood of Mohammerah, and the negotiations now pending with Turkey in regard to British interests in the Persian Gulf.

A separate letter will shortly be addressed to you, dealing with certain legal points raised in the shorter telegram from Sir P. Cox, to which you refer in your letter of the 28th May.

In the meantime, Sir E. Grey considers it important to arrive at a definite decision in regard to the procedure to be followed, in order to bring about a satisfactory settlement of the frontier between Turkey and Mohammerah.

As soon as Sir P. Cox furnishes precise information—which, apparently, will not be available until the astronomical position of Hawizeh has been fixed—in regard to the frontier as locally observed, Sir E. Grey proposes to have a map reproduced, indicating this line, for communication to the Russian Government.

As you are aware, the Russian Government have already promised His Majesty's Government their support in upholding that line, though they have not been furnished as yet with full details regarding it (see Sir E. Grey's telegram No. 335 of the 11th April, 1912, to St. Petersburgh, and Sir G. Buchanan's reply No. 150 of the 16th April, 1912).

Sir E. Grey proposes at the same time to inform the Russian Government that the prospects of a favourable award in regard to this portion of the frontier if the matter is referred to The Hague Tribunal are uncertain, and that in these circumstances he proposes to inform the Ottoman Government that His Majesty's Government cannot conclude certain pending negotiations in regard to other British interests in the Persian Gulf, or acquiesce in the desired increase of the Turkish customs duties, unless the Turkish Government formally undertake not to disturb the land frontier as locally observed near Mohammerah. He will further suggest to the Russian Government that

this is a solution to which, in his view, the Persian Government could not reasonably object, inasmuch as it would secure to Persia a frontier more favourable than that indicated by the line of the mediating commissioners, which Persia conditionally accepted sixty years ago.

With regard to the boundary between the Persian Gulf and Diaji—that is, so long as it follows the course of the Shatt-el-Arab, His Majesty's Government have already expressed to the Russian Government the view that a frontier more advantageous to Persia than the mediating commissioners' line of 1850 could not be successfully claimed against Turkey, and the Russian Government have intimated their concurrence. But Sir E. Grey considers that the fact that the boundary of mid-channel has been locally recognised as the boundary for a period of sixty years does afford a certain lever for His Majesty's Government in negotiating directly with the Turkish Government, and one which may prove of value in securing satisfactory arrangements for the proposed commission for the conservancy of the Shatt-el-Arab; he would accordingly propose to inform the Turkish Government, when negotiations are reopened, that His Majesty's Government consider that Persia and the Sheikh of Mohammerah have certain prescriptive claims on the Shatt-el-Arab, and that His Majesty's Government are only prepared to agree to the proposed draft convention provided the rights of Persia and the Sheikh of Mohammerah are adequately safeguarded, and provided also that the land frontier, as locally observed, is accepted by the Turkish Government.

Sir E. Grey would be glad to be furnished with the views of the Marquess of Crewe on this subject; and he would also be glad to be furnished with his Lordship's observations on the draft convention and report regarding the future conservancy of the Shatt-el-Arab, a copy of which is enclosed for convenience of reference.*

In particular, he would be glad to know whether the draft convention should, in Lord Crewe's opinion, be modified in any respect in order to provide for the points enumerated in the final paragraph of Sir P. Cox's shorter telegram of the 23rd May.

In regard to the longer telegram of the same date, I am to enclose, for the information of the Marquess of Crewe, certain comments on matters of detail.†

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

Enclosure in No. 147.

Telegram from Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to the Marquess of Crewe.—(Communicated by India Office, May 24.)

Muscat, May 23, 1912.

APART from question of jurisdiction over waters of Shatt-el-Arab, which has been dealt with separately, following are salient points of my letter No. M. 85, dispatched to Government of India and London on 21st May, regarding Turco-Persian frontier, in reply to Mr. Parker's memorandum of 3rd April:—

Firstly, independence of Kaab. Statement at p. 8 of Wilson's précis shows Kaab to have been under Persia in 1620, that is, prior to date of Sultan Murad's treaty. Moreover, available evidence tends to show that they never were really Turkish subjects.

Comments by Mr. Parker.

Firstly. I have no observations to make on this beyond what is stated in my memorandum of the 3rd April, 1912. A full history of the Chaab is contained in Major Rawlinson's memorandum of 1844. I have already pointed out that the statement on p. 7 of Lieutenant Wilson's précis to the effect that the independence of the Chaab was recognised by treaty is based on an erroneous reference and appears not to be founded on fact. But the point seems only to be of academic interest.

Secondly. I have stated in detail in my memorandum the reasons why the prospect

Secondly, ownership of the lands between the locally recognised frontier and Mohum-

* No. 93.

† See Confidential Paper No. 10055.

merah. Local Turkish authorities have accorded unequivocal and repeated recognition of present boundary by erection of marks and maintenance for many years of permanent frontier customs post at Diniji; such action should make it impossible for them after a lapse of sixty years to claim another frontier to which their pretensions are at least doubtful. It is hardly likely that they would get support from Hague Tribunal.

Thirdly, status in Turkey of sheikh and his tribesmen. Foreign Office seem to be unduly apprehensive in this regard. Provisions of Treaty of Erzeroum appear to refer to nomad tribes only, and not to settled agriculturists like these. They represent bulk of very large agricultural community, and as Turks have no surplus population wherewith to replace them, it seems extremely unlikely that they will attempt to oust them, even if they were in a military position to do so, which is very doubtful. Problem has not caused much practical difficulty hitherto, and will probably adjust itself if left to the local authorities. Sheikh of Mohammerah, at all events, will adopt a reasonable attitude in his own interests.

Fourthly, boundary near Havize. From last paragraph of decision of mediating commissioners quoted at p. 49 of Wilson's précis, it is plain that they neither visited Havize nor delimited any boundary on the spot in that locality, nor intended that their rough diagram should serve as a basis for demarcation. Again, local boundary described in my despatch No. M. 18, dated 6th May, proves to be practically identical with that proposed by Rawlinson at pp. 17 and 18 of his memorandum of 6th January, 1844, just received.

Layard also suggested line west of Havize (*vide* pp. 8 and 53 of Foreign Office memorandum). Undisturbed possession of Havize district is of most vital importance to Sheikh of Mohammerah, and it is inconceivable that we should tolerate any alteration of *status quo* in it, especially when Rawlinson stated categorically in 1844 that it was not in dispute.

Fifthly, policy of Sheikh of Mohammerah in purchasing land in Turkey. It is a misapprehension to suppose he is seeking territorial encroachment. Such a contingency does not arise, for in regard to these lands sheikh, like any other foreign landholder, is in position of a Turkish subject and is amenable to Turkish land laws.

of a favourable issue of a reference to The Hague Tribunal seems uncertain: but the matter is admittedly one of speculation.

Thirdly. A separate memorandum on this point is in course of preparation.

Fourthly. The boundary commissioners visited Hawizeh in February 1852, but only after they had drawn the line. When Sir P. Cox receives Sir E. Grey's telegram No. 335 of the 11th April, 1912, to St. Petersburgh he will perceive that "His Majesty's Government *would strongly deprecate*, on account of the local inconvenience which would be caused, the disturbance of the frontier even as locally observed near Hawizeh." I think Sir P. Cox is mistaken in saying that the mediating commissioners did not intend their diagram to serve as a basis for demarcation: though they did not intend it as a detailed basis.

Fifthly. The misapprehension rests on the following passages quoted from pp. 58 and 59 of Lieutenant Wilson's précis:—

"When reproved by the Persian Governors of Arabistan for favouring this policy (*i.e.*, of land purchase in Turkey), the Sheikh of Mohammerah used to reply that he did so from patriotic motives and with the strategical object of securing from hostile influences areas of Turkish territory adjacent to that of Persia.

"The acquisition of lands of Umm-al-Rissis and Umm-al-Khassasif, opposite Mohammerah and Fuliyeh respectively, and of the Diaji lands on

the Turco-Persian frontier was used to illustrate this point of view, which found ready acceptance, and the purchase of the islands of Shamshamiyah by the Sheikh in 1909 may be quoted as another instance of this policy, although it is doubted whether it has ever been so regarded by the Sheikh. It is certain, however, that the almost complete absence of active frontier disputes in *Arabistan* and the Shatt-el-Arab is in no small degree due to the fact that the Sheikh of Mohammerah is the actual owner of all lands in the neighbourhood of the Turco-Persian boundary, and of all islands in the Shatt-el-Arab which might form objects of dispute."

Sixthly, I have urged that we inform Turks that, having been close observers of the *status quo* as interpreted locally on the Shatt-el-Arab and in Arabistan for the last sixty years, we have reasonably [?] guaranteed [?] its permanency, and have entered into engagements with sheikh from which we cannot recede and which pledge us to maintain it. This intimation will be no surprise to them, having regard to intimation made to Bussorah authorities by consul at Bussorah referred to at p. 61 of Wilson's précis.

Sixthly. It is doubtful whether our assurances to the Sheikh of Mohammerah can be so interpreted as to pledge His Majesty's Government to maintain the *status quo* as locally interpreted, even in face of an adverse award by The Hague Tribunal. It is not clear whether the *status quo* here referred to is that of the frontier, or whether it is intended to include the exercise of jurisdiction by the sheikh on the right bank of the Shatt-el-Arab, even if the Turks object to the exercise of such jurisdiction: on this latter point *vide supra*, under "thirdly."

Seventhly, I have suggested that, in exchange for satisfactory settlement of boundary question as regards Arabistan without recourse to Hague Tribunal, we might support Turkey in their claim to the Zohab lands, which in 1891 [?] they proposed to take in exchange for abandonment of their [? lands] in the Arabistan region. Their claim in the Zohab region seems fairly strong, and might be supported by us on condition that oil company's concession at Kasr-i-Shirin was obtained and confirmed by them. This might even be an advantage to the company.

Seventhly. Zohab lies largely within the Russian sphere in Persia.

I am not sure what correspondence is here referred to.

Eighthly, I have urged our interests in South Persia now centre mainly in Arabistan, and are bound up with the maintenance of the sheikh's position. Thus we have everything to lose by failure to preserve well-established *status quo*, a course which will greatly discredit value of our engagements in the Gulf generally, and sow seeds of doubt and distrust in the breasts of other native rulers and communities with whom we are in relations. In this connection I believe improved and trustful attitude of Sheikh of Koweit is due less to what we have done for him personally than to his innocuous [? ingenuous] appreciation of the patent value of our support for his friend the Sheikh of Mohammerah. Please also see admiral's letter of 6th May, in which I concur.

Eighthly. There is a consensus of opinion as to the importance of securing the most favourable settlement possible for the sheikh.

Lastly, I would observe that recent marked and persistent endeavours of the

Porte to take advantage of our friendly attitude during negotiations, in order to prejudice local *status quo* to their advantage in regard to various issues under discussion, entirely bear out apprehensions expressed at conclusion of joint Indian and Foreign Office minute of 24th April; and I respectfully urge that unless we can induce Turks at early date to comply with our requirements we should consider expediency of break[ing] off negotiations and asserting ourselves effectively in the Gulf at the points where our claims conflict.

A. P.

(Addressed to Government of India; repeated to India Office.)

Foreign Office,
May 30, 1912.

[23344] No. 148.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received June 1.)

Sir, *Admiralty, May* 31, 1912.

WITH reference to your communication of the 10th May respecting the Italian occupation of Astropalia, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that this island, which is marked Stampalia on Admiralty charts, contains a fine and easily defended harbour from which a fleet could operate against Asia Minor ports or the sea-borne commerce using the Dardanelles.

It is considered that the permanent transfer to a naval power of Stampalia, or of the islands of Lemnos or Mitylene, which are also occupied at present by Italy, would operate adversely to the interests of the freedom of the navigation of the Dardanelles by all other European nations, a freedom at present regulated under European sanction.

I am, &c.
O. MURRAY.

[23415] No. 149.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 181.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June* 1, 1912.

MY telegram No. 172 of 25th May.
Following from consul at Bussorah:—

"Your telegram No. 45.
"Telegraph clerk at Fao reports that there are no developments whatever in the way of fortification.
"The Vali inspected the Turkish telegraph station. Clerk hears object of visit was merely to settle question relative to old telegraph office which has since been demolished.
"(Sent to Constantinople; repeated to Bushire.)"

[23421] No. 150.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 2.)

(No. 72.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Paris, June* 2, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 233 of 30th May.
I saw Minister for Foreign Affairs at Elysée dinner for the Queen of Holland.
Russian Ambassador had sounded him concerning Samos, but he had not received

any communication from Italian Ambassador, who, Minister for Foreign Affairs thinks probably refrains from saying anything in consequence of what Minister for Foreign Affairs stated to Russian Ambassador after consultation with M. Louis Renault, legal advisor to Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which was that protecting Powers of Samos could not properly make such a communication to the Porte as Russian Ambassador described, and which, moreover, Italy would have no right to suggest.

Minister for Foreign Affairs will send me fuller written statement of his views.

[23469] No. 151.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 445.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May* 25, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to report that from a telegram which has reached me from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah it would appear that mention is made in the annual budget of the Tapoo (land registry) Office at Bussorah of a salary of 300 piastres per annum assigned to clerks of the Tapoo Office at Koweit.

A similar provision has been made in former budgets since the year 1325; the figure mentioned is of course purely nominal, and totally inadequate for any clerk's service, and no official has as yet been appointed to the Tapoo Office at Koweit.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[23470] No. 152.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 446.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May* 27, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna respecting the occupation of Rhodes and other islands by the Italians, and measures of administration taken by the Italians.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 152.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 59.)
Sir, *Smyrna, May* 20, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of three despatches received from Sir Alfred Biliotti:—

1. Reporting the occupation by the Italians of the islands of Calymnos, Scarpantos, and Cassos, with presumably others, and the grant of autonomy to the islanders.
2. Measures taken for the administration of Rhodes.
3. The history of the Committee of Union and Progress at Rhodes, and the severity with which the members have been treated by the Italians.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 152.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 41.)
Sir, *Rhodes, May* 14, 1912.

IT was given out some days ago by Italian officers that the Island of Scarpantos had been occupied by their forces. If this rumour is well founded, it is likely that the Isle of Cassos has been occupied at the same time.

A trustworthy passenger who has just arrived from Calymnos, where the coasting steamer in which he was travelling called on the night between the 11th and 12th instant, communicated to me the following information :—

During the previous night, a small force of Italians from the cruiser "Pisa," which was accompanied by a transport with troops on board, landed and captured the Mussulman kaimakam, who was sent on board the squadron together with the few soldiers or gendarmes stationed in that island. A proclamation was published in the name of the King of Italy to the effect that autonomy was granted to them, and that they might hoist a white ensign with a blue cross from end to end, which henceforth was to be the flag of the island.

The Calymniotes immediately caused a seal to be engraved with the inscription "Municipalità di Calimnos."

It would seem that the flag hoisted in the Isle of Nissiros was similar to that of Calymnos, and that the mudir (a Greek) was not dismissed.

The Italian ships are said to be proceeding to Leros, Patmos, and Nicaria for the same object as at Calymnos. These four islands had been granted, ever since the conquest by the Turks, special privileges, which were extended to some of the other isles.

It is presumable that the autonomy proclaimed at Calymnos will be extended to all the islands in the Ottoman archipelago without exception.

My informant added that as they steamed before the town of Cos in the middle of the day no Turkish flag was flying on shore, and that they inferred that that island had also been occupied.

As I was about to close my despatch I received confirmation of the occupation of Scarpantos and Cassos. The Mussulman families in both these islands and at Halki have just arrived here in a Greek coasting steamer, on board of which they were embarked by order of the naval authorities in these islands. The kaimakam of Scarpantos, a very fanatical member of the Committee of Union and Progress, the mudir of Cassos, and even that of Halki, it appears, together with Mussulman civil and and military officials and men of all ranks in those islands, are kept prisoners on board the squadron.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Enclosure 3 in No. 152.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 42.)
Sir, *Rhodes, May 14, 1912.*

AS soon as possible after the occupation of the town of Rhodes the Italian authorities dismissed the police after having imprisoned a few of them.

The cadi and the mufti were allowed to carry out their respective duties as before.

The harbour master (a Mussulman) having fled inland, an Italian naval officer was appointed in his place.

The chief of the municipality (a Greek) has been confirmed in his post under the appellation of "Sindaco."

The inmates of the central prison having all escaped, as previously reported, the head constable and all the guards are kept in prison until it has been ascertained whether there is any truth in the rumour that they connived at their escape with a view to increase the number of the troops. A certain number of these prisoners (I presume those not condemned for political crimes) have been again imprisoned. The remainder are allowed to go free and work in the town.

The director of the Turkish post and telegraph office has been embarked as one of the militant members of the committee.

To my knowledge, no measures have yet been devised for repairing the Eastern Telegraph Company's cable between Rhodes and Crete, which is out of order (since the 2nd instant).

No decision has yet been taken with regard to the Mussulman exiles, who expected to be pardoned by the Sultan.

The following changes have been introduced in the administration of Rhodes :—

Health Office.—The whole staff was offered the option of continuing their services with their present salaries without taking an oath of any kind.

The doctor (a Greek), the European secretary (a Frenchman), and all the Mussulman employés resigned. Only a Greek watchman remained at his post. A temporary Italian doctor was appointed to carry on the service.

Customs.—All the officials of this department having tendered their resignation, the Italian authorities insisted on their reconsidering their decision, but notwithstanding that they were offered the same salaries without any work being exacted from them, they persisted in their refusal.

The Customs mudir was embarked on board the squadron, charged with having concealed the account-book and the cash, which he is said to have deposited in the Ottoman Bank branch here.

The Tobacco Régie has been authorised to dispose of their stock up to a certain date, after which only retailers will be allowed to sell the tobacco now in their possession. It is said that Italian tobacco is expected to arrive within a week. Contraband regulations are maintained.

The Public Debt officials have consented to continue to carry on their duties.

The Muhassebe and Emlak Mussulman secretaries have similarly retained their posts (with the exception of one in each administration, who have been embarked as members of the committee).

The Ottoman post office having been closed, an Italian office has been opened in its place.

The French and Austrian post offices have been allowed, on the 9th instant, to continue their duties as before.

The distribution of letters addressed to the Turkish post office is entrusted to the French.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Enclosure 4 in No. 152.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 44.)
Sir, *Rhodes, May 15, 1912.*

THE Italian authorities appear to be under the impression that all the members of the Committee of Union and Progress are dangerous. I shall try to explain the reason.

Since the first day of the proclamation of the constitution at Constantinople, a handful of individuals belonging to the scum of the population assumed a high-handed attitude towards the existing Ottoman authorities at Rhodes, and cowed them down so completely that the valis who succeeded each other (with the exception of Rashid Pasha) were under their influence.

No wonder that inferior officials had to submit to their will and volunteer to join them.

The original militant members of the committee were thus increased in number and prestige, and a time came when, with the exception of a few functionaries of independent character and means, no one could get a Government employment sufficient to live upon without becoming a member of the committee.

Soubhi Bey, the late excellent and sympathetic vali, who on his arrival here six months ago gave undeniable proofs of his straightforward and amiable character and of his ardent wish to promote the welfare of the island and its inhabitants, was finally compelled to submit to their influence. He ceased to be a free agent, and was led to the final act of following the army, which ended in his surrender to the Italians. There is no one on this island who does not sympathise with him in his present situation.

The actual number of the militant members of the committee may amount to twenty-five or thirty. The fifteen of them who were sent on board on the 8th instant, with one exception, belong to this gang. Their arrest has been hailed with the greatest satisfaction by the whole Mussulman population as is sure to be that of the remainder of the band.

But the severity displayed against Turks at large strikes them with terror. This is perhaps a result which the Italian authorities have in view, as when the fifteen members were being embarked on the 8th instant their leader dared to threaten to take revenge on his return. Similar threats of vengeance have been proffered by other Mussulmans.

It appears that the severe measures to which the Italians resort are taken at the instigation of a Turkish exile named Ismail Hakki, who appears to be an enemy of the Committee, and of other informers who probably have private grudges, and who, as is always the case, avail themselves of similar circumstances to take their revenge.

The Italians, on landing in Rhodes and in the Sporades, were received with great enthusiasm by native Christians, who saw in them their possible liberators from Turkish yoke. The natural sympathy between Italian and Greek races had a further stimulant in their common hatred of the Mussulmans. In the case of the Italians, this feeling was increased by their recent experience in Africa, which awoke in them an exaggerated mistrust of all Mussulmans, whom they believe to be ready to commit massacres at any moment. Under these circumstances it is not strange that they should take the minutest precautions. Be this as it may, the exhibition of adverse feeling by Christians in Rhodes, Cos, and the Sporades Isles cannot fail to exite Mussulman fanaticism not only against Italians and Greeks but against all Christians without distinction, and may have its echo in an attack upon defenceless Christians in Anatolia. Should the Italians evacuate these islands before the present feeling of animosity entirely subsides, it would not be safe for any Greeks to remain unless the privileges enjoyed *ab antiquo* by the Sporades Isles are confirmed and extended to Rhodes and Cos. Without some such arrangement, there appears to be no other option for their inhabitants but to emigrate *en masse*

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

[23471] No. 153.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 447.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May 27, 1912.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 168 of the 20th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna respecting the surrender of the Turkish forces at Rhodes.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 153.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 61.)
Sir, *Smyrna, May 22, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of two despatches received from Sir Alfred Biliotti at Rhodes, giving details of the engagement of the 16th May between the Italian and Turkish troops at Psithos, the number of killed and wounded, and particulars as to the disposal of prisoners.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 153.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 47.)
Sir, *Rhodes, May 17, 1912.*

IN the afternoon of the 15th instant bluejackets were landed to guard the town.

All the troops in Rhodes, computed to number 8,000 or 10,000 men, had been sent by sea to both sides of the island in order to simultaneously invest Psithos (9 miles distant), where the Ottoman troops were concentrated.

As the latter did not believe that the Italian forces were as important as described to them, General Ameglio, with a view to avoid bloodshed, had requested the cadi to accompany the expedition in order to explain matters, but as his advanced years did not allow him to do so, he sent as his delegate a Hodja, named Mahmoud Abdullah Bey; the Binbashi commanding the troops answered that his duty was to resist to the last,

and that he would send back the Italian prisoner in his hands. The latter arrived here before sunset accompanied by the harbour-master and his two attendants.

From 6 A.M. to 4 P.M. we heard in the town the report of a heavy cannonade.

I have just been informed that yesterday afternoon the Italians surrounded Psithos on all sides, and that after a heroic resistance, which the Italians themselves admired, the Turkish troops surrendered, with the exception of the Binbashi, his officers, and about 200 men, who did so this morning, and some stragglers.

General Ameglio rendered the honours of war to Binbashi Abdullah Bey by handing back to him his sword and shaking him by the hand. He congratulated him on the gallant conduct of the troops under his command and clasped him in his arms.

The military commander of the troops and that of the gendarmerie arrived in the town in the same carriage as the Italian general, who appeared on the balcony of Government House and delivered a speech suitable to the occasion. He was loudly applauded by all Christians amid shouts of "Viva l'Italia! Viva il Generale Ameglio!"

Abdullah Bey and the other officers have been treated with great kindness, being allowed to go and see their families before being lodged in the barracks.

The Italian troops are expected to arrive this evening with 900 prisoners. Fourteen bullocks have been slaughtered for the dinner of both parties.

The casualties among the Italians are six Bersaglieri killed and twenty-eight wounded of this and other arms. Of the Turkish soldiers ninety were killed and 130 wounded. The casualties on previous encounters after the landing of Italians were two killed and eight wounded, and of Turkish soldiers five killed and fifteen wounded.

At this moment (8 P.M.) the arrival of the troops and of prisoners in the square in front of the Government House is being greeted with hurrahs. Nearly all the population, including Mussulman women, have been gathered there since noon in the expectation of this arrival.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Enclosure 3 in No. 153.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 48.)
Sir, *Rhodes, May 18, 1912.*

ALL the war prisoners, the Binbashi, officers, rank and file, captured at Psithos, were embarked last night on the transport "Bulgaria" bound for Italy.

This morning a large man-of-war's barge was placed at the disposal of Mussulmans who wished to see, or convey clothing, &c., but not money to their relatives on board. Besides men, many Mussulman women availed themselves of this permission. The "Bulgaria" departed to-day.

Italian officers express their admiration of the Turkish soldiers by stating that they fought like lions. An Italian officer also mentioned that these soldiers had been two days without food, a fact which was confirmed to me by the Greek guides of the Italians to Psithos. They stated that when Psithos was invested the bread ration of the Turks was still baking, and that they had to depart without it, leaving also on a tree near the village fountain a bullock which they had slaughtered after having purchased and paid for it.

Italian officers further state that the reception they received from the Greeks was most enthusiastic, and that the 16th instant having been an exceptional hot day, their march to Psithos would have been most painful without the water which Greek women distributed to the soldiers to quench their thirst.

I am informed by a Greek peasant just arrived from Psithos that some wounded Turkish soldiers were picked up by Italians on the battlefield, and conveyed by them to the Greek church, which served as a temporary hospital, together with the corpse of an Italian soldier.

Of the fifteen Italian soldiers who were too severely wounded to be conveyed to the town two died, and two others are said to be dying.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

[23480] No. 154.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 456.)

Sir, *Constantinople, May 28, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith, for such action as you may think it desirable to take, copy of a despatch which has been addressed to me by Dr. Clemow reporting on the interference by the Italian naval authorities in the Red Sea with the pilgrim steamers proceeding to Camaran, and requesting that a definite guarantee may be obtained from the Italian Government that such interference with pilgrim traffic shall cease, and that no action will be taken by the Italian authorities tending to hinder the proper provisioning of the Camaran lazaret or to weaken the efficiency of that institution as a sanitary barrier to the spread of diseases.

Dr. Clemow further requests that the Indian Government may be apprised of the difficulties experienced in providing a proper supply of food and other necessities for the pilgrims at Camaran in order that the pilgrims may be warned in good time and advised to carry with them a sufficient supply of sound and suitable provisions.

I note that the Marquis di San Giuliano, in his reply to your representations regarding the free passage of pilgrim ships to and from the Hedjaz, copy of which is enclosed in Sir R. Rodd's despatch No. 26, Treaty, of the 6th March last, gives an assurance that due consideration will be given to your request, so far as the exigencies of the war permit, should hostilities still be continued in October next, when the Hadj is described as commencing. The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs is not quite correct in his dates however. Courban Bairam begins this year about 18th November, and Shewal on 13th September, but pilgrims begin to arrive at Camaran long before the latter date. Last year, for instance, when the fêtes at Mecca fell eleven days later than they do this year, over 6,000 pilgrims had passed through Camaran by before the end of July. They had begun arriving already in June. This year pilgrims, mainly from the Dutch East Indies at first, are beginning to arrive by now. The naval commander at Massowah is therefore entirely mistaken in saying that the first pilgrims will arrive at the end of September, when the big rush will begin; but probably half the total number of pilgrims will have reached Camaran by that date.

However much the Italian Government may fear military contraband, &c., in the case of "pilgrims" returning from Arabia, there would seem to be no ground for such apprehensions in the case of pilgrims arriving at Camaran from beyond Bab-el-Mandeb, nor for interference with the ships conveying them. As pointed out in Dr. Clemow's enclosed despatch, such interference has practically no effect in wounding Turkey, while it inflicts much damage and annoyance on ships and pilgrims belonging to neutral Powers.

An assurance similar to that given by the Marquis di San Giuliano to you is contained in the Italian notification of the extension of the blockade of the Yemen coast of the 7th ultimo, translation of which is enclosed in the despatch from His Majesty's vice-consul at Hodeidah, which forms the second enclosure in this despatch. But as in spite of these assurances the interference with pilgrim traffic to the Hedjaz does not seem to have ceased, I venture to suggest that further representations might be made to the Italian Government on this subject by His Majesty's Government in concert with the Netherlands Government, whose interests are also largely affected, and who are about to receive from their representative here a communication similar to that addressed to me by Dr. Clemow.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 154.

Dr. Clemow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 57.)

Sir, *Constantinople, May 23, 1912.*

IN my despatch No. 44 of the 24th April, I had the honour to draw attention to the interference with pilgrim steamers going to Camaran by the Italian naval authorities in the Red Sea. Since that date the following telegrams have been received by the sanitary administration:—

"*Hodeïda, le 14 mai*, 1912.

"Autorités informent que cinq sambouks Idrissi pratiquent pirateries Farsan et proximité Camaran, dont attaque est hypothèse et pour crainte [*sic*]. Commandant supérieur italien répond vouloir perquisitionner navires pèlerins malgré décision Conseil."

"*Camaran, le 19 mai*, 1912.

"Italiens communiquent officiellement vouloir ouvrir lettres officielles lazaret, malgré respect préalable."

At Tuesday's meeting of the Board of Health, the vice-president raised the question as to whether it would be possible or desirable to open the Camaran lazaret at all during the approaching pilgrim season, in view of the great difficulty of provisioning that institution, of the increasing interference of the Italians, and of the alleged piratical exploits of Seid-Idris, unless, he added, some definite guarantees were obtained from Italy that she would cease to interfere with the pilgrim traffic and with the communications of the lazaret. He asked whether it would not be possible to arrange for the application of the necessary sanitary measures either at the ports of departure in India and the Dutch Indies, or at Aden or Perim in the course of the voyage, or finally at Abou-Saad near Jeddah. There are obvious objections to all those alternatives, as I pointed out to the meeting. The Indian Government had to abandon a few years ago the practice of applying a preliminary observation to pilgrims in the port of departure, owing to the fact that the Hadj season now falls in the monsoon, and the pilgrim camps would be flooded or rendered uninhabitable by the rains; and the accommodation at Aden, Perim, and Abou-Saad is absolutely inadequate to meet the needs of the large number of pilgrims that come from beyond the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. After a short discussion the following decision was taken:—

"Les dernières informations reçues de la direction du lazaret de Camaran étant en contradiction avec les déclarations, faites antérieurement par M. le Dr. Schoenberg, en ce qui concerne la possibilité d'assurer le fonctionnement régulier du lazaret susmentionné, le conseil attire sur lesdites informations l'attention de M. le délégué *ad interim* d'Allemagne."

It may be feared, however, that this decision will prove to be little, if any, more effective that previous ones in the same sense, more particularly as Dr. Schoenborg, the German delegate, was absent from the meeting and was replaced by a junior dragoman of the German Embassy. I venture therefore to suggest that it is urgently desirable that firm and united representations should be made to the Italian Government by Powers who are more directly interested in the pilgrim traffic than is Germany. Any interference with the proper working of the Camaran lazaret affects principally the pilgrims from the British and Dutch Indies, and, after consulting with my colleague the Dutch delegate, we have thought it necessary to make identical representations in the above sense to our respective heads of missions.

It would seem to be desirable to recall to the Italian Government that the lazaret of Camaran is to all intents and purposes an international institution, created under international auspices, and supported by international funds.

The immense majority of pilgrims quarantined there are non-Ottoman.

To take the figures of one season only, that of 1910–11, out of a total of 37,300 pilgrims interned in the lazaret, only 2,054, or between 5 and 6 per cent., were Ottoman subjects (mainly from the Yemen, the Hedjaz, and from Irak-Arabi). Of the remainder, 15,110 were British Indians, and 16,042 were Dutch or British pilgrims from the Dutch Indies or the Malay Peninsula. Thus 31,152, or about 84 per cent. of the whole, were British or Dutch subjects. It follows that, if Italy persists in interfering with the working of the Camaran lazaret, she inflicts practically no wound on Turkey, but, on the other hand, causes very serious damage to British and Dutch interests. Similarly, if the number of steamers carrying pilgrims to Camaran be considered, it is found that out of a total of 44 (in the year 1910–11), 35 were under the British flag, 8 under the Netherlands flag, 1 under the German, and none under the Turkish or any other flag.

Another point of primary importance is the fact that the Camaran lazaret forms the first line in the sanitary defences, not only of the Near East, but of all Europe against the invasion of cholera and plague. All countries are therefore equally

interested in ensuring the efficiency of this first line. Italy's action can only tend to weaken or destroy that efficiency, and if cholera or plague is, in consequence, introduced to the Hedjaz and so to Europe, she must incur an exceedingly grave responsibility. In view of the remarks above alluded to by the vice-president of the Board of Health, it appears that it is even contemplated to allow the lazaret to remain closed entirely during the coming season. The results could only be disastrous in view, as stated above, of the inadequacy of any alternative lazaret where the required measures could be applied.

I should add that the proposal of the vice-president was not supported by any other Turkish member, most of whom seem to be in favour of opening the lazaret, sending there the usual annual mission of medical and other officers, and throwing on Italy the responsibility for any regrettable results that might follow. The foreign delegates could take little share in the discussion, as they are compelled to maintain an attitude of strict neutrality. I promised, however, to inform my Government fully of the situation, and of the alternatives proposed by the vice-president.

My Netherlands colleague and myself trust that it may be possible, as a result of united representations to the Italian Government, to obtain from them a definite guarantee that they will not interfere with the pilgrim traffic, nor with the proper provisioning of the Camaran lazaret, and that they will take no action tending to weaken or destroy the efficiency of that institution as a sanitary barrier to the spread of diseases.

In view of the difficulties already reported in providing a proper supply of food and other necessities for the pilgrims at Camaran, I venture to suggest that this fact be brought, without further delay, to the notice of the Indian Government with a view to forewarning intending pilgrims and advising them all to carry with them a sufficient supply of sound and not easily spoilt provisions. They should also be informed at the same time that provisions that are found to be spoilt or unfit for food will, as in the past, be destroyed by the lazaret authorities, and the pilgrims should therefore take the utmost care to provide themselves mainly with such articles as rice and other grain, tinned foods of recognised brands, and similar articles which will keep good at least till they reach the Hedjaz.

I have, &c.
F. G. CLEMOW.

Enclosure 2 in No. 154.

Vice-Consul Richardson to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 13 E.)
Sir, *Hodeidah, April 13, 1912.*

WITH reference to my telegrams Nos. 17 and 19 respectively, I have now the honour to forward a copy of the notification received from the senior naval officer of the Italian forces in the Red Sea, communicating an extension from the 8th instant of the blockade of the Yemen littoral already imposed to the coast and adjacent islands lying between Ras Isa and a point about 10 miles to the north of Loheia.

It will be seen from the geographical limits given in the notification that the island of Camaran and the ports of Salif and Loheia fall within the area to which the blockade is now extended; further, that there is no intention to interfere with the pilgrim traffic to Mecca passing through Camaran, or with the working of the lazaretto established at that place.

The notification enjoins that pilgrim vessels will only be permitted to enter or leave Camaran by the southern channel (the one exclusively used by such vessels), and that during their entry and exit they will be escorted by a ship of the blockading squadron through the zone of blockade to prevent them communicating with places therein.

It is added that ships undergoing quarantine at the lazaretto will be kept under strict surveillance of one of the Italian ships of war.

In the circumstances, I am of opinion that no inconvenience will be experienced by either pilgrims or pilgrim vessels during the next season at Camaran, nor is there any reason why the pilgrim traffic between India and the Hedjaz should not take its usual course, notwithstanding the state of war existing in this quarter.

I have already informed the Governments of India and of the Straits Settlements by telegraph of the extension of the Italian blockade to the island of Camaran, and of

the intention of the Italian naval forces not to interfere with the pilgrim traffic passing through the above-mentioned place, as communicated to me in the official notification from the senior naval officer at Massowah.

I have, &c.
G. A. RICHARDSON.

P.S.—The only vessel now within the newly blockaded zone is the British steam-ship "Benwood" that is loading salt at Salif for the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, and she is expected to sail to-day at noon for Calcutta

G. A. R.

[23494]

No. 155.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 102. Commercial.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May 29, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 456 of yesterday's date respecting the action of the Italian naval authorities in and near Camaran, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of a despatch from the British delegate on the Board of Health, forwarding two reports from the director of the lazaret of that place.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 155.

Dr. Clemow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 61.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May 29, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 57 of the 23rd instant, I have the honour to transmit copies of two reports received by the Sanitary Administration from the acting director of the Camaran lazaret. These reports, dated respectively the 30th March and the 1st April, throw some further light on the action of the Italian naval authorities in and near Camaran. They were written nearly two months ago; but, as shown in my previous despatch above alluded to, the Italians still continue to interfere with ("perquisitionner") pilgrim ships and open the correspondence of the central administration with the lazaret officials.

I have, &c.
F. G. CLEMOW.

Enclosure 2 in No. 155.

Director of Camaran Lazaret to the Sanitary Administration.

Messieurs, *Camaran, le 17 (30) mars, 1912.*

JE viens de vous lancer la dépêche suivante :—

"Cabotage défendu par Italiens entre Salif, Camaran et Louhaya. Matériaux construction bois grand besoin, courrier suspendu, provisions réduites. Veuillez tranquilliser familles, employés.—Aoux."

Voici les motifs de mon câblogramme :—

Hier, au soir, vers les 3 heures et demie de l'après-midi, le vaisseau de guerre italien "Garibaldino," un de ceux qui se trouvent le plus souvent dans notre rade, est entré dans le port, remorquant une embarcation arborant drapeau blanc, qui s'est dirigée, après ancrage du bateau, à l'échelle du village; elle transportait un officier et une douzaine de soldats.

L'officier étant sorti à terre faire part au gouverneur du but de sa visite, celui-ci me fait appeler pour servir d'interprète. Ayant répondu immédiatement à son appel, je

vous rapporte littéralement les détails des communications que l'officier a faites au gouverneur de vive voix, s'aidant de son carnet de notes :—

1. Défense aux caboteurs-voiliers de naviguer entre Camaran et Salif et Camaran–Loubaya et sommations aux capitaines qui ne peuvent pas tirer à terre leurs voiliers de faire remettre aux Italiens leurs voiles et gouvernails dans le délai de la nuit qui vient de s'écouler, avec menace de faire couler à l'aube tout caboteur qui ne s'y serait pas conformé.

Ce matin, tous les sambouks sont à terre et le port est vide, ne contenant que notre remorqueur. A son entrée, deux bateaux italiens stationnent, l'"Elba" et le "Garibaldino," lançant à droite et à gauche leurs canots-automobiles et leurs embarcations.

A ce premier article, je me suis permis de faire à l'officier l'observation suivante :—

"Vous n'êtes pas sans savoir, monsieur, que le lazaret de Camaran, dont je suis le directeur-gérant, s'occupe présentement de réparations et constructions des ariches servant à héberger les pèlerins qui ne tarderont pas à arriver et dispose des préparatifs pour la prochaine saison, comme bois, &c. Or, tous ces matériaux nous sont transportés par quelques caboteurs contractés, à cet effet, par le lazaret; et, dans l'état actuel des choses, vous arrêtez ces travaux, et vous nuisez effectivement au pèlerinage; pour cela vous êtes prié de me faire savoir si vous tenez compte ou non de ce fait pour en aviser mes supérieurs."

"Aucune communication particulière," m'a-t-il répondu, "ne m'a été faite à ce sujet par mon commandant; je note votre observation pour la lui exposer, et nous vous aviserons dans le cas où des modifications seraient prévues pour la quarantine; dans le cas contraire, il sera fait comme il a été dit."

Jusqu'à maintenant, nous n'avons rien reçu.

2. Le second article se rapporte à la pêche que les Italiens permettent, pourvu qu'elle se fasse dans les *conditions inhérentes aux conventions internationales.* Je souligne ce bout de phrase tel qu'il a été exprimé par l'officier.

3. Le troisième article a trait aux voiliers que l'administration des Salines de Salif emploi pour le transport de l'eau de Camaran.

Ce service restera autorisé jusqu'à nouvelle décision sous la surveillance minutieuse des Italiens; ces sambouks sont forcés de passer la visite à l'aller et au retour. Il est utile de vous signaler ici un fait précédent qui a amené cette autorisation : Le contre-torpilleur "Bersaglieri" avait arrêté, depuis quelques jours, un sambouk amenant de Camaran à Salif l'ancien mudir du télégraphe avec sa famille partant en congé. Ils étaient presque décidés à s'emparer de ce fonctionnaire, qui ne put leur échapper qu'après de longs débats et qu'après s'être déclaré arabe et non turc revenant à Sanaa, son pays.

Mais les Italiens (Dieu sait pourquoi) arrêtent le sambouk à son retour à Camaran et lui séquestrent ses deux voiles et son gouvernail et disent au nakhouda qu'il en sera fait de même de tous les sambouks qu'ils rencontreraient. Et craignant que ce sambouk sans voiles et sans gouvernail n'aille à la dérive, ils ont cru de leur devoir de le remorquer jusqu'au port. Cet agissement amena l'intervention de Mr. Cowdry, ingénieur en chef des Salines de Salif, qui obtint l'autorisation de libre passage de l'eau jusqu'à nouvel ordre.

Depuis ce jour-là, le bateau italien a disparu et, au lieu d'un, deux ont reparu hier et ont transmis officiellement, comme il vous a été rapporté, les décisions qu'ils exécutaient déjà depuis plusieurs jours sans aucune communication officielle. Quoique je connaisse peu les lois internationales, il m'est difficile devant ces actes de dompter une indignation que me suggère le simple raisonnement.

4. L'apothéose : M. l'officier fait remarquer en partant et insiste à ce que je le traduise en arabe, aux gens rassemblés en foule dans la résidence du gouverneur; il prétend, dans sa conviction, que c'est dans un but purement humanitaire et pour sauvegarder les intérêts [*sic*] qu'ils agissent ainsi, prétendant que s'ils rencontraient des sambouks non atterris ils lanceraient dessus leurs bombes et, ainsi, ils font éviter aux indigènes ce danger—démonstration logique de la bonté des Italiens et digne apothéose de leur ultimatum.

J'en ai fini, messieurs, avec le rapport de cette entrevue et j'ai hâte d'en arriver à ce qui nous intéresse plus directement :

Nos travaux de réparation, quoique pour la plupart achevés ne peuvent plus être poursuivis dans les ariches par manque de plusieurs articles de matériel; il en sera de

même, d'ailleurs, de la construction des nouvelles ariches, pour laquelle nous attendons d'ailleurs votre crédit; nous tâcherons de faire le mieux possible avec notre reste existant, si vous nous faites parvenir vos ordres par le fil. Quant aux autres travaux dans la section des machines et dans la maçonnerie, ils se poursuivent régulièrement.

Le bois nous manque complètement, et il nous en faut 500,000 kilog. pour le prochain pèlerinage.

Le courrier est suspendu; depuis quarante-cinq jours nous n'avons reçu aucune lettre. On dit que le prochain courrier vient par voie de terre. Nous l'attendons.

Par mon expression "provisions réduites," j'ai voulu vous informer de la cherté de la vie, qui se fait de plus en plus grande, et du danger qui nous menace par le peu de provisions ("doura") existant chez les indigènes.

Voilà, messieurs, l'explication de ma dépêche, et si j'ai terminé en vous priant de tranquilliser nos familles, c'est pour éviter qu'ils soient mis au courant de ce qui se passe par l'intermédiaire des journaux et dans votre bonté paternelle, nous sommes sûrs de trouver le plus salutaire garant de cette tranquillité que vous voudriez bien assurer à nos familles privées de nos nouvelles.

Veuillez, &c.
Le Directeur-Gérant,
Dr. AOUN.

Enclosure 3 in No. 155.

Director of Camaran Lazaret to the Sanitary Administration.

Messieurs, *Camaran, le 19 mars (1er avril)*, 1912.

FAISANT suite à ma dépêche ainsi conçue :—

"Italiens autorisèrent remorqueur embarcation voyage Salif après perquisition aller retour, cassèrent câble attendant ordre Massaouah permettre naviguer sambouks contrat. Venu Salif, télégraphier.—Aoux,"

je m'empresse de vous en donner les détails dans cette lettre, qui sera la suite d'une précédente que je vous expédie par le même courrier, viâ Aden, par un bateau de sol, à défaut de meilleure occasion; et, pour plus de sûreté, je compte les faire assurer.

Le 17 (30) au soir, le même officier italien dont il est question dans ma lettre précédente, vint à terre demander au mudir de lui faire livrer toutes les voiles et les gouvernails des sambouks, malgré qu'ils avaient tous atterris; et, me rendant sur les lieux, l'officier me communiqua l'autorisation au "steam-launch," et à l'embarcation du lazaret de naviguer, pourvu qu'ils accostent à l'aller et au retour le bateau italien et passent la visite, tout en maintenant sa défense aux sambouks, quoique desservant le lazaret et disant vouloir retourner à leur lieu de départ trois d'entre eux partis, depuis plusieurs jours, aux fins de nous transporter du matériel et du bois.

Le lendemain, c'est-à-dire hier, jugeant nécessaire de vous aviser de ces faits et de la rupture du câble allant de Camaran à Salif que les Italiens ont effectuée à l'aube du 17 (30), je me rendis à Salif avec MM. Simon, Behjet Effendi, et Ieannidès et, accostant le contre-torpilleur "Garibaldino," qui se trouvait en rade avec le "Bersaglieri," je priai M. le commandant de faire ses désirs; celui-ci répondit, en nous invitant avec insistance de monter à bord pour nous communiquer les ordres qu'il avait reçus de Massaouah au sujet de lazaret. Nous montâmes et le commandant nous avoua ne vouloir nuire d'aucune façon à ce qui intéresse la station quarantenaire, d'après les ordres supérieurs qu'il avait reçus.

Profitant de cette déclaration, je lui exposai la situation de nos sambouks, et il fut étonné que le croiseur "Elba" n'eût pas respecté nos observations réitérées.

L'"Elba" étant parti, il fit lancer un Marconi lui signifiant de laisser passer les trois sambouks dans le cas où ils les rencontrerait.

Il m'invita, en outre, d'écrire une lettre au commandant supérieur naval à Massaouah pour lui exposer clairement la situation, lettre qu'ils se chargèrent d'expédier par le "Bersaglieri" partant à Massaouh, ce que je fis dans les termes suivants :—

"M. le commandant,

"Vous êtes prié de me faire savoir si les quatorze voiliers desservant le lazaret de Camaran sont compris dans la défense de cabotage que vous avez instituée. Dans le cas signalé par le commandant où vous craindriez une contrebande pratiquée par ces

sambouks, je prends sur ma responsabilité que ces sambouks, dont vous autorisez la navigation, soient exclusivement pour notre service et ne transportent que notre matériel.

"Veuillez, &c."

Ayant appris que quelques sambouks à eau se permirent d'apporter dans leurs coins les plus cachés quelques provisions que les Italiens, découvrant, séquestrèrent ou jetèrent à la mer, nous demandâmes au commandant si nous ne pouvions pas porter pour notre usage quelques provisions de Salif, comme le "doura" pour nos ouvriers et la viande, qui nous manque complètement à Canaran. Il ne fit aucune difficulté et permit toute importation, pourvu que ce soit pour l'usage du lazaret et de ses employés.

"Mais," ajouta-t-il, "il vaudra mieux que vous en demandiez l'autorisation au commandant de Massouah."

Ce que je refusai nettement en lui disant que cela m'importait d'une façon directe, je m'en abstiens, ainsi que chacun de nos employés et ouvriers, et je n'ai écrit à M. le commandant au sujet des sambouks que pour dégager une responsabilité qui m'incombe vis-à-vis de l'administration que je sers.

Il termina en disant que, si lui nous autorise, d'autres bateaux défendront peut-être, ce qui m'étonna grandement, car il vous est facile, messieurs, de remarquer la contradiction et l'indécision qui règnent dans leurs agissements, de telle sorte qu'il semble que les ordres donnés par l'un sont ignorés ou mal compris par l'autre.

Veuillez, &c.

Le Médecin-Gérant,

DR. AOUN.

[23748] No. 156.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 72.)
(Telegraphic.) *Rome, June 3, 1912.*

MY telegram No. 66 of 24th May.

Russian chargé d'affaires has in strict confidence admitted correctness of rumour reported to me that he had been instructed to represent to Italian Government that the occupation of Mitylene would cause Turkish Government to again close Dardanelles, and to explain in a friendly manner that the Russian Government therefore trusted that such occasion would not be given to the Turks. Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that occupation of Mitylene had not yet been contemplated hitherto, and that he did not think it likely to take place. It was at the same time impossible for him to foresee all future contingencies, and he could not be expected to give a definite pledge.

[22445] No. 157.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Louther.

(No. 234.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 3, 1912.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 424 of the 18th ultimo, relative to allegations made by the Turkish Government respecting the method employed in the relief of the escort of His Majesty's consulate-general at Bagdad, and I transmit to you herewith copy of a further communication which I have addressed to the Turkish Ambassador at this Court on the subject.*

I approve your Excellency's proposal to abstain from action on Mr. Lorimer's suggestion that the Turkish Government should be asked to allow the operations of embarkation and landing to take place at the consulate-general itself when desired by the British authorities.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

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* No. 158.

[22445] No. 158.

Sir Edward Grey to Tewfik Pasha.

HIS Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Turkish Ambassador and has the honour to refer to his communication to his Highness of the 7th March last, relative to certain alleged circumstances connected with the recent relief of the escort of His Majesty's consulate-general at Bagdad.

Sir E. Grey has now received, through His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, in reply to the enquiry made of his Excellency, a report respecting the allegation that, while the relieving force brought their rifles with them, those belonging to the outgoing detachment were retained, which is the only point, among those raised by Tewfik Pasha in the first instance, hitherto unexplained.

Mr. Lorimer states that the allegation in question is without foundation, and that the departing detachment did not leave their rifles at Bagdad, but carried them away in accordance with the procedure invariably followed in such cases. Anybody, adds Mr. Lorimer, who witnessed the departure of the last detachment must have seen that this was the case.

Sir E. Grey is accordingly unable to understand how the report which reached the Turkish Government on this subject can have originated.

Foreign Office, June 3, 1912.

[23756] No. 159.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 73.)
(Telegraphic.) *Rome, June 3, 1912.*

MY immediately preceding telegram of to-day.

I should have added that Minister for Foreign Affairs undertook, should there be any change of intention as regards occupation of Lesbos or other more northern islands, to give the Russian Government [group undecypherable] warning.

[22572] No. 160.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Louther.

No. 316. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, June 4, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 176 of 27th May.

Your Excellency should take an opportunity of pointing out to the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the solution proposed by him is not new, and falls so far short of the Italian requirements as to offer little prospect of serving as a basis for discussion.

An interview appeared in the "Daily Chronicle" on 1st June with Signor Giolitti in which his Excellency is stated to have said that there has been no annexation of Tripoli and Cyrenaica in the sense of making them integral portions of the Kingdom of Italy. Italy has merely declared her sovereign rights over those territories, and an important distinction is stated to exist between these two methods of procedure—the overlordship of the territory has been transferred from Turkey to Italy, but no more, and this is of importance to the Moslem inhabitants, who maintain intact the unhampered exercise of their religion, laws, and customs.

In point of fact the difference appears to be merely verbal, but if the Minister for Foreign Affairs is anxious to find a way out (of which your Excellency is in a better position to judge than I), it has occurred to me that a treaty might possibly be drafted which Turkey could accept without great loss of face.

Supposing that Turkey acknowledged the overlordship of Italy in civil matters, Italy might acknowledge the spiritual overlordship of the Sultan and guarantee to the Moslems the free exercise of their religion and the maintenance of their laws and customs. She might even undertake to pay a yearly sum through the Sheikh-ul-Islam on some suitable occasion annually in recognition of the spiritual khalifate.

Your Excellency might discuss this with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but it would be better not to mention that you do so under instructions.

[24011] No. 161.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 5.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 1st June, 1912, regarding the Turco-Persian frontier.

India Office, June 4, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 161.

The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, June* 1, 1912.

SHATT-EL-ARAB.

See telegram dated 23rd ultimo from Resident, Persian Gulf.

I request that following points may be considered :—

1. There is no need for further evidence of ownership if, as is believed by His Majesty's Government for reasons stated in memorandum by Mr. Parker, pp. 40–43, waterway was assigned to Turkey by Treaty of Erzeroum.

2. Please refer to Mr. Parker's memorandum, p. 27, where text of Persian note is quoted, with regard to fortifying banks. Apart from self-denying ordinance of 1848, it is clear that Persia's right to fortify left bank was admitted by Turkey in 1888; but His Majesty's Government are advised that such fortification would not affect rights of Turkey in waterway, as Persian right does not imply ownership of any part of waterway, but flows from fact that Persia owns left bank.

3. With regard to forts at entrance of Karun, Mohammerah town, where such forts were already in existence, was expressly excepted by self-denying ordinance of 1848.

4. Statement in Canning's despatch of 1st November, 1841, which Mr. Parker quotes verbatim on p. 19 of his memorandum, constitutes the evidence regarding liability to Turkish dues. It is further stated by Canning that part of Bagdad pashalik's annual revenue was derived from such dues.

[24009] No. 162.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 5.)

Sir, *India Office, June* 4, 1912.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 31st May, 1912, regarding the Turco-Persian frontier in the neighbourhood of Mohammerah, and connected questions.

2. With reference to paragraphs 3 to 7, I am to say that while Sir P. Cox takes a more extreme view than the Marquess of Crewe is able to support, both of the rights of the Sheikh of Mohammerah and of the extent of our obligations towards him, it is common ground that it is highly important as regards our own political position in the Persian Gulf that all the Sheikh's legitimate claims should be successfully upheld, and that he should, if possible, be secured in possession of the territory, jurisdiction, and rights which have been his for the last half-century, and which the Turkish Government—whatever mental reservations they may have made, or may have been entitled to make, under the convention of 1869—do not appear to have seriously disputed by overt action. Lord Crewe understands that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs shares that view, and that being so, he is content to leave it to Sir E. Grey to adopt whatever line of action appears to him most likely to attain the common object. But he would, of course, wish to be consulted before any particular settlement is adopted.

3. As regards the draft convention for setting up a Riverain Commission in the Shatt-el-Arab, I am to enclose copy of a telegram that has been received from Sir P. Cox, dated the 29th May, 1912, and to offer the following remarks.

4. Colonel Cox's desire to simplify the duties of the commission, in order to avoid the risk of international complications in respect of dues and other matters, will be appreciated. But his alternative proposal depends upon the possession by this country of effective control of the management of the Bagdad–Bussorah Railway, for other reasons, and also because, unless such control is secured, the efficient maintenance of navigation, unhampered by prohibitive dues, becomes a matter of almost vital necessity to British trade as an alternative means of communication with Bagdad. The question of British participation in the railway is under separate consideration, and unless there is a strong probability of its being decided in our favour, it seems unnecessary to pursue Colonel Cox's proposal. Indeed, it is doubtful whether, if the Turkish Government is to retain the right of buying up the railway, the control of the river could in any circumstances be safely vested in the company.

5. Sir E. Grey is presumably satisfied that the convention as drafted is one which it is reasonable to ask the Porte to defend *vis-à-vis* of other Powers. The contingency that other Powers might object to the levying of dues is referred to in the report. But they might of course go further, and decline to recognise the commission altogether, and a disagreeable incident might then arise out of some question of police. Lord Crewe can, however, only suggest that that risk should be taken, and he agrees with the authors of the report, as against Colonel Cox (who had not seen the report when he telegraphed), that it is essential to the efficient navigation of the river to take as many functions as possible out of the hands of the local authorities.

6. With reference to paragraph 9 of your letter, I am to say that it appears to his Lordship desirable, if possible, to provide (as proposed by Sir P. Cox in his shorter telegram of the 23rd May) that the British representative should also represent the interests and rights of the Sheikh of Mohammerah, so far, that is to say, as they are admitted by the Treaty of Erzeroum. Perhaps a clause might be added to the effect that nothing in the convention shall derogate from the rights enjoyed by Persia and Mohammerah under article 2 of the treaty, and that it shall be the duty of the British member to make such representations to the commission as may at any time be necessary upon any question affecting those rights.

7. As your letter is marked "immediate," Lord Crewe has replied to it without awaiting the receipt of the views of the Government of India. These will be communicated to you in due course, with any further observations which may seem to be called for.

8. I am to add that Rear-Admiral Sir E. Slade has read and concurs in paragraphs 4–6 above.

I am, &c.
LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

Enclosure in No. 162.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *May* 29, 1912.

I HAVE just received draft convention for Riverain Commission on Shatt-el-Arab, and submit following comments thereon :—

Originally idea of commission was mooted merely as a means of composing our dispute with Turks as to buoyage of bar in a convenient manner. It was then generally recognised that introduction of any international element besides river Power, or Powers, and ourselves would be dangerous. As first presented by His Majesty's Government to the Porte, proposal was that "all matters pertaining to navigation and the requisite periodical surveys" should be superintended by the commission. In Turkish Government's reply expressing concurrence, the above simple limits of scope of commission were still observed, except that inclusion of quarantine, which obviously must in any case be eliminated, was proposed by the Turks.

But scope of commission is greatly extended by convention as now drafted, which contemplates that not only superintendence, but also improvement of approaches to river, presumably by dredging the bar, and construction of docks and wharves, besides levy of dues to recoup themselves for such outlay, should be undertaken by the commission.

The inclusion of levy of dues seems to introduce into convention that international leaven which we are so anxious to exclude, as it involves intimation to foreign Powers and discussion of possible objections on their part.

On the supposition that adequate voice is obtained by us in management of section of railway between Bussorah and Bagdad, I venture to suggest, as calculated to obviate or discount the above difficulty, the following course :—

Article 23 of Bagdad Railway Convention, which will presumably be reproduced in new convention for Bussorah section, already provides for construction of docks and wharves. Could not this article be so worded as to cover eventual dredging of bar and recovery of cost through railway tariff under the article? In the event of this arrangement being possible, it would leave such inexpensive services for Riverain Commission that levy of pilotage would sufficiently cover them. Even pilotage I would almost be inclined to dispense with, and would suggest that it might sufficiently satisfy *amour-propre* of Turks if they required annual license fees to be paid by the private pilots at present plying on the river.

In event of course being adopted, duties of commission in regard to projects involving large capital expenditure would, in that case (?), so far as they affected navigation, be limited to eventual superintendence, and their functions would for the rest be confined to what it was originally contemplated that they should carry out. There would then be no need for [? word omitted] or communication to other Powers.

Following modifications of draft convention would be involved by adoption of above course :—Omission in article 12 of word "publish," and insertion in its place of words "furnish to the high contracting parties"; omission of articles 8 and 9, and of items (*a*) and (*b*) of article 6.

It would also involve omission of all references, wherever they occurred, to police and quarantine. Duties of policing river, in which suppression of piracy must be included, ought rather to fall, as at present, to local authorities. There are obvious objections to inclusion of quarantine.

[24034] No. 163.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 5.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the resident in the Persian Gulf, Muscat, dated the 4th June, 1912, regarding the Shatt-el-Arab.

India Office, June 5, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 163.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *June 4, 1912.*

FOLLOWING further observations are submitted, now that final draft of convention for river commission and copy of letter dated 15th instant from committee have reached me :—

1. I am somewhat alarmed by the remark made by the committee, that they have sought to protect oil company's property by the wording of article 16, as their remark suggests that they do not altogether exclude from contemplation the possibility of jurisdiction being conceded to the Turks over the left bank as well as on the waters.

2. It was not with reference to Bussorah that I recommended that quarantine should be excluded, but to the fact that British residency surgeon, acting on behalf of Persian Government and Tehran Sanitary Board, controls quarantine at Abadan and Mohammerah.

3. Ships are at present piloted in and out of Shatt-el-Arab by persons who are privately engaged by shipping companies' agents, and who are natives of Koweit and Bushire. Would it be possible to prevent continuance of present practice in the case of ships which refuse to pay the regulation pilotage dues?

(Repeated to the Secretary of State for India.)

[24075] No. 164.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 252.)

Sir, *Paris, June 5, 1912.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 72 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a letter from M. Poincaré containing a statement of the views of the French Government with regard to the question of Samos and the attitude which, in his Excellency's opinion, ought to be adopted with regard thereto.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

Enclosure in No. 164.

M. Poincaré to Sir F. Bertie.

Mon cher Ambassadeur, *Paris, le 4 juin, 1912.*

VOUS avez bien voulu, le 31 mai, me communiquer un mémorandum du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique au sujet des garnisons ottomanes à Samos. Aucune démarche n'a été faite auprès de moi par l'Ambassadeur d'Italie à ce sujet. M. Isvolsky, toutefois, m'ayant fait part de la démarche faite par le Cabinet de Rome auprès de son Gouvernement, nous nous sommes entretenus de la question.

J'ai exposé à M. Isvolsky, comme je l'avais fait à votre Excellence, les objections qui me paraissent s'opposer à ce que la demande que ferait éventuellement l'Italie aux trois Puissances, qui ont reçu communication du statut accordé aux Samiens, soit prise en considération. L'installation d'une garnison turque à Samos est antérieure à la déclaration de guerre; quand au mois d'octobre dernier cette garnison a été renforcée, la Grande-Bretagne et la Russie, consultées par mon prédécesseur, ont jugé inutile de faire une protestation, ou d'exiger de la Porte le retrait de ses troupes. Une pression en ce sens ne saurait s'expliquer aujourd'hui et aurait toute l'apparence d'un manquement à la neutralité.

Il pourrait en être autrement si la Porte devait se servir de l'île comme point d'appui d'opérations stratégiques ou si la garnison était augmentée.

En résumé, je ne crois pas que les trois Puissances aient à modifier l'attitude qu'elles avaient adoptée au mois d'octobre dernier lorsqu'elles se sont bornées à faire observer à la Porte que le *statu quo ante* devrait être rétabli à la fin de la guerre. L'Italie avait été tenue au courant de cet incident et M. Bollati avait dit à ce propos au chargé d'affaires français que son Gouvernement avait reconnu la neutralité de cette île et entendait la respecter.

Croyez, &c.

R. POINCARÉ.

[24328] No. 165.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 7.)

Sir, *India Office, June 7, 1912.*

IN continuation of my letter dated the 4th instant, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a further telegram from Sir P. Cox regarding the proposed riverain commission on the Shatt-el-Arab, together with some observations which Rear-Admiral Sir E. Slade has been good enough to furnish privately thereon.

It cannot be denied that difficulties with other Powers may arise in connection with the proposed convention, but no practicable alternative has presented itself, and the Marquess of Crewe remains of the opinion that the risk must be taken.

I am, &c.

R. RITCHIE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 165.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *June* 4, 1912.

FOLLOWING further observations are submitted now that final draft of convention for river commission and copy of letter dated the 15th instant from committee have reached me :—

(1.) I am somewhat alarmed by the remark made by the committee that they have sought to protect oil company's property by the wording of article 16, as their remark suggests that they do not altogether exclude from contemplation the possibility of jurisdiction being conceded to the Turks over the left bank as well as on the waters.

(2.) It was not with reference to Bussorah that I recommended that quarantine should be excluded, but to the fact that British residency surgeon, acting on behalf of Persian Government and Tehran Sanitary Board, controls quarantine at Abadan and Mohammerah.

(3.) Ships are at present piloted in and out of Shatt-el-Arab by persons who are privately engaged by shipping companies' agents, and who are natives of Koweit and Bushire. Would it be possible to prevent continuance of present practice in the case of ships which refuse to pay the regulation pilotage dues?

(Repeated to Secretary of State for India.)

Enclosure 2 in No. 165.

Extract from Private Letter from Rear-Admiral Sir E. Slade, dated June 5, 1912.

WITH regard to Cox's further telegram, I think his alarm is quite unfounded. It was put in so as to prevent any interference with the pier and buoys and wharves of the oil company.

Quarantine is out, and we decided it was better not to put it in.

The third point is not so easy to deal with. It is quite possible that under the capitulations a foreign ship might object to compulsory pilotage, but I am not sure. I don't know that the case would be any easier if the river were handed over to the railway company, as the status of the company appears to me to be much the same as that of the commission, and their proceedings might equally well be objected to under the capitulations.

The only point in favour of the railway company is that Germany would anyhow be represented, and she is the only Power that practically matters at present.

The only way out of the difficulty is to get the Turks to make a regulation that no pilots are allowed to work on the river unless they are licensed, and then to forbid the pilots from engaging themselves privately or in any way except through the commission.

[23987] No. 166.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 241.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 7, 1912.*

THE Italian Ambassador read to Sir A. Nicolson on the 31st ultimo a telegram from his Government to the effect that the Turkish authority in charge of Camaran lazaret was adopting a hostile attitude towards Italy, and that the Italian Government were considering whether they should not take over the care and administration of the lazaret during the war.

Sir A. Nicolson told the Marquis Imperiali that the Italian Government were raising a very wide and dangerous question. The lazaret was used as a quarantine station for the pilgrims who arrived from all parts of the Moslem world for the accomplishment of their most sacred religious duties. What would be their feelings if they

found the lazaret under the administration of a Christian Power who was at war with the Commander of the Faithful? As his personal opinion, Sir A. Nicolson strongly recommended as little interference as possible with the pilgrims. The Marquis Imperiali said he would telegraph Sir A. Nicolson's remarks to the Marquis di San Giuliano.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[24342] No. 167.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 8.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a memorandum by Sir Arthur Hirtzel relative to the Bagdad–Bussorah Railway.

India Office, June 7, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 167.

Memorandum by Sir A. Hirtzel respecting the Bagdad–Bussorah Railway.

1. *The present Position.*—At the interdepartmental conference of the 30th March, 1911, Sir E. Grey proposed that we should ask for a 50 per cent. participation, and a memorandum for the Turkish Government was prepared on this basis. On the 7th April, 1911, the Board of Trade wrote that there were "only two practicable policies": (1) "To participate in the working of the southern section on terms of equality with Germany, but to the exclusion of all third parties as regards control," and (2) to refuse participation altogether. No further communications passed between the departments on this subject, but on the 12th July, 1911, a draft memorandum to the Turkish Government was privately communicated to the India Office. This memorandum contained the proposal, which was actually made to the Turkish Ambassador on the 29th July, 1911, that Great Britain, Russia, France, Germany, and Turkey should participate at the rate of 20 per cent. each, and that a convention should be drawn up precluding differential rates on all the railways of Asia Minor. The Turkish Government replied on the 15th April, 1912, not expressly rejecting this proposal, but substituting 25 per cent. participation for Great Britain, France, Germany, and Turkey, to the exclusion of Russia. But in the private discussions that preceded the dispatch of this reply, the Turkish representatives more than once stated in the strongest terms their objection, on political grounds, to the inclusion of Russia, and said that if His Majesty's Government pressed it they would be obliged to insist on the admission of Switzerland. This His Majesty's Government would, of course, not be able to accept, for it would strengthen the Bagdad Railway Company's interest at our expense. Russia, it will be borne in mind, has said that, while she only wants to help us, she wants to be admitted if France is admitted.

The Turkish counter-proposal of the 15th April, 1912, is, therefore, not a mere modification of our own, but, in effect, a complete rejection of it. A new situation is thus created, and it is submitted that in the circumstances His Majesty's Government are bound to consider it on its merits, and that it is possible for us, without doing any violence to diplomatic conventions or giving any just cause of offence to Turkey, to treat our proposal of the 29th July, 1911, as completely out of court, and to substitute for it a better one, if such can be found.

It may be conceded that as we have actually proposed the admission of France and Russia, our position is no longer as strong as it was for proposing their omission. But here the Turks have fortunately helped us. For if Russia insists on participating in the event of French participation, while Turkey will admit France but not Russia, the result is a deadlock, of which the only solution is the omission of both.

The following considerations are intended to show that the proposal of the 29th July, 1911, should not be pressed, and that the terms which Sir E. Grey originally wished to put forward are, as the Board of Trade held, the only ones on which we should now consent to participate.

II. *The Objections to the last Proposals made by His Majesty's Government.*—The view underlying those proposals is that, provided we can secure a convention absolutely precluding differential rates on the whole of the Bagdad Railway system, the degree of our participation in the Gulf section is immaterial, and that it is, in fact, worth our while to purchase the convention by abating our claims to participation. The objections are:—

(*a.*) That no convention can absolutely preclude differentiation or the application of those advantages which protectionist countries accord their trade. This is in effect the Board of Trade view also.

(*b.*) That the Bagdad Railway Convention already does so, as far as any convention can. See article 24 of the "Cahier des charges": "Tous les tarifs, qu'ils soient généraux, spéciaux, ou proportionnels ou différentiels, sont applicables à tous les voyageurs et expéditeurs sans distinction." This applies to the Bagdad-Khanikin branch (article 1 of the convention), and to the Alexandretta concession, which is given on the same terms as the convention of 1903, except where otherwise specified.

(*c.*) Differential rates are not the only risk involved in absence of effective control. The Bagdad Railway Committee, in its report of the 26th March, 1907, quoted Sir James Mackay's opinion that the company, if under "a management of which this country exercised no influence or control," "would lose no time in establishing a line of steamers from the terminus to Bombay, and in course of time they would virtually monopolise the entire trade between India and the Persian Gulf, because it would be impracticable for the British lines to compete against the ships supported by the railway company, which would give through bookings and through rates for passengers and cargo." This danger would exist the moment that the Bagdad Railway Company's interest preponderated over the British interest, *i.e.*, the moment the latter was less than 50 per cent.

Again, there is the risk (referred to in the same report) that the "railway company will make it their business to cut the freights between Bussorah and Bagdad, so as to be able to compete with the river-borne traffic," that is to say, the Bagdad Railway Company, if preponderant on the Gulf section, will drive the steamers off the river, and then raise the rates on the railway. They will not, of course, be able to do so beyond the point at which it will pay to put the steamers back on the river. But in order that we may be ready to take advantage of that moment when it comes it will be necessary that the steamers shall be there, which probably means paying Messrs. Lynch or someone else a subsidy to keep them efficient, though idle—another charge on the revenue of the Gulf section before it can pay a dividend.

(*d.*) The Gulf section being the shortest necessarily determines the rates on the northern section to Bagdad. It is therefore our interest to have as free a hand as possible on that section. Therefore, a convention applicable to the whole Bagdad Railway system is a positive disadvantage to us.

(*e.*) It is our interest to have as free a hand as possible, because it is essential to prevent the Bagdad Railway Company's interest from getting the preponderance. This is not sufficiently secured by the 20 per cent. participation, since we cannot depend on the permanence in all circumstances of the *entente*, commercially and financially (French finance, for example, is notoriously beyond the control of its Government); while politically it may be a serious source of weakness elsewhere (as pointed out by the Viceroy in his telegram of the 29th May; see appendix) that we should have important commercial interests bound up with the permanence of the *entente* in Mesopotamia.

(*f.*) As a financial proposition, it is to be feared that 20 per cent. in an international railway 350 miles long, costing less than £3,000,000, to construct, will not be considered worth looking at. On the other hand, the facts that (1) the German company has first of all to be compensated; (2) rolling stock has to be provided and ports to be built; (3) the expenses of international management will be unnecessarily heavy; (4) the railway will have no prospect of paying for many years (until, in fact, Mesopotamia is irrigated and developed); (5) in the meantime there will be no guarantee (for it may be taken as certain that the Government of India, at all events, will give no guarantee), will be further disastrous to its flotation. The British share will simply not be taken up, and where is the Russian share to come from, when the Russian Government cannot find money for its favoured project, the Trans-Persian Railway, and Russian unofficial finance is concentrated on that enterprise?

(*g.*) If, therefore, participation on these terms is of no value as a financial proposition, and if we have not sufficient control to prevent the Bagdad Railway interest from preponderating, there is no apparent commercial advantage in participation over non-participation.

(*h.*) The Gulf section would be a most valuable political asset if it were all British. It would still be valuable if it were British controlled, but it loses in value by leaps and bounds as British participation diminishes, until a point is reached where prestige will suffer less and dignity be better consulted if the country which owns 70 per cent. of the trade and 85 per cent. of the shipping stands aloof altogether, rather than participates on an equality with three other Powers who have practically no material stake in the country at all.

(*i.*) No attempt has been made to show how the joint arrangement is to work in practice, *e.g.*, is the actual working agency to be international, and is it seriously thought that that would be workable?

Again, in order that the commercial interests of the line may be effectively safeguarded, it must be worked independently of, and to some extent in opposition to, the Bagdad Railway, but it is extremely doubtful whether any arrangement with this object would be found workable in practice.

III. The view therefore supported is that of the Board of Trade in their letter of the 7th April, 1911, that the only alternatives are to participate on a 50 per cent. basis (to which it should be added that, in that case, the chairman must be British), or not to participate at all.

(*a.*) The view that British control on the Gulf section is useless without a convention to prevent differential rates on the rest of the system has already been dealt with. It has also been pointed out that by controlling the shortest section we should, in fact, control the rates over the German section. It may further be urged that the sole effect to the Bagdad Railway Company of imposing differential rates against British goods between Alexandretta and Bagdad would be to send British trade round to the Bussorah–Bagdad line. With 50 per cent., the casting vote on the board, and a free hand as regards rates, our position would, therefore, be impregnable.

(*b.*) What would it be if we did not participate at all?

It must be premised that from the British and Indian point of view it is better that the railway should not be built. It must be remembered that there is no analogy between the position now and the position in 1903. Then we might have had substantial participation in the whole length of the railway, which would, besides, have admitted us to the exploitation of a new country. Now we are offered 20 per cent. in a branch 350 miles long, which will admit other Powers on equal terms with us to the exploitation of a country of whose trade we already have 70 per cent.

Politically.—The construction of the railway means the military and administrative consolidation of Turkey in Mesopotamia, with an increased tendency to seek influence in the Persian Gulf, and to extend control in Arabia, and an increased power of offensive against British interests, including Koweit and Mohammerah. It further means the firmer establishment of German, French, and Russian interests, with a corresponding tendency to intervene, in a region where the outside interests have hitherto been preponderatingly British. (It is not, of course, suggested that we can, or ought to try to, keep everyone else out; but to invite them in, and on such terms, is quite another matter.)

Commercially. Our interests are twofold. There is the existing trade with Western Persia *viâ* Bagdad and Khanikin, and the trade which is expected to grow up when Mesopotamia is irrigated and developed. The Persian trade is worth about 2,000,000*l.* It is difficult to forecast its future, but if the Trans-Persian Railway is built, and Mohammerah connected with it and with Burujird, the Persian trade will presumably desert Bagdad altogether. If Persian railways remain in abeyance, it is not clear that we shall be worse off than we are at present, *so long as the ring between Bagdad and the Gulf is open*, and article 24 of the "Cahier des charges" operates to prevent differential rates on the Bagdad Railway. Again, the future local trade of Mesopotamia, being mainly in agricultural products, will probably in any case flow westwards to Alexandretta.

This view seems to be borne out by the latest figures available for the trade of Bagdad, 1910, which are as follows:—

Imports to Bagdad.

From—	£
United Kingdom	1,517,762
France	203,284
Austria-Hungary	180,011
Belgium	211,835
Germany	53,705
United States of America	806
India, China, and Japan	664,147

Exports from Bagdad.

To—	£
United Kingdom	330,361
France	132,131
Austria-Hungary	14,591
Belgium	3,077
Germany	20,441
United States of America	155,019
India, China, and Japan	87,478

The bulk of the British and Indian imports seems to be in cotton goods, twist, and woollens, and that of the exports carpets, wool, opium, and hides.

It is, however, possible that cotton will be grown and pressed in Mesopotamia, and will find its way into eastern markets, and the mineral resources of the country (especially oil) may also add to the trade eastwards. But, speaking generally, it does not seem certain that the volume of trade resulting from the development of Mesopotamia will necessitate the construction of the Gulf section if India is not to lose its share, and it is probable that India will retain her share whether it is built or not.

But, of course, it is not possible to assume that the railway will never be built. From the difficulty which it is understood that the Germans have had in disposing of the bonds of the other sections of the Bagdad Railway, and from their willingness to part with their rights in the Gulf section, it may, indeed, be inferred that they will be in no hurry to undertake the latter, while the Turks themselves have neither the money nor the means of obtaining it. The construction will therefore be postponed, but—as the line is of military and political importance to Turkey—it will eventually be built. In the interval much may have happened in Mesopotamia, as the Viceroy has reminded us, and it is not easy to foresee the conditions that will then exist. But supposing that the railway is worked on commercial lines, and that the clause precluding differential tariffs is still operative, it does not appear, from the point of view of our trade, that the fact of our having no share in it will be a disadvantage. But, of course, it may not be run on commercial lines. Protected by their kilometric guarantees the Germans may prefer to let it rust—it would always be available for Turkish military purposes—and attract all the traffic to the northern section. In that case, too, it does not appear that, *provided the river were kept free*, we should be any worse off commercially than if the line did not exist at all. Politically, no doubt, we should be, because the Turkish consolidation would be effected, and if the railway were built under German auspices, German influence would be brought very near to the Gulf. But provided that we can ensure that the line will not be carried beyond Bussorah, or, if so, only on terms agreeable to Great Britain, and provided that we have in the meantime consolidated our own position in the Gulf, that risk might fairly be taken.

The one serious drawback would be that referred to under head (*c*) on page 144—the danger of the extinction of the British carrying trade between India and Bagdad. Although this disadvantage might to some extent be compensated by the advantages that might accrue to other branches of trade, it is a very real one and would have to be faced. (It could only be met, apparently, by a corresponding interworking between steam-ships and railway companies on the Indian side—a matter which would obviously require very careful consideration.) Moreover, as has already been pointed out, it is equally attendant upon any arrangement which does not secure to this country effective control of the Gulf section.

IV. *The Importance of the River.*—The necessity of keeping the river open has been emphasised throughout these remarks. By that is meant not only ensuring that it is kept properly dredged and navigable, and that no prohibitive dues are placed upon shipping (both of which will be secured, as far as the Shatt-el-Arab is concerned, by the separate convention setting up a Riverain Commission), but also by maintaining the right of navigation as far as Bagdad. This is equally necessary, for the reasons already given, whether we renounce the railway altogether or participate in it on terms

short of effective control. It is therefore essential that the questions should at once be closely examined with a view to ascertaining exactly what rights of navigation British shipping possesses on the Tigris and Euphrates, and what steps should be taken to put them on a secure basis.

V. *Conclusions.*—The conclusions seem to be—

(1.) That, *if the river is open*, it is better for us that the railway should never be built;

(2.) That it is therefore not our interest to facilitate it except on terms which will make it commercially and politically advantageous to ourselves;

(3.) That the only terms on which it will be thus advantageous are that we secure effective control, *i.e.*, 50 per cent. participation, the casting vote on the board of management, and a free hand as regards rates;

(4.) That failing that, we should stand out altogether, and concentrate on getting what we want in the Gulf, and especially the joint control with Turkey of the Shatt-el-Arab and the right of navigation to Bagdad, which are really the key to the situation.

Mr. Brereton (Government director of Indian railway companies) has read and entirely concurs in these remarks so far as they touch on the commercial aspects of the scheme.

VI. *The Practicability of obtaining 50 per Cent.*—At the interdepartmental conference of the 30th March, Sir E. Grey had apparently no doubt of this, and he at once proceeded to prepare the ground with France and Russia.

France.—Sir E. Grey to Sir F. Bertie, No. 123 of the 6th April, 1911.—"M. Cambon . . . had told Count Benckendorff that the question as to whether France should participate in the Bagdad–Gulf section was one which concerned us alone. She would participate if we wished her to do so, but she did not regard it as her affair."

Russia.—Sir E. Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, No. 105 of the 10th April, 1911.—Count Benckendorff said that . . . "the Russian desire was to help us, and therefore their proposal [*i.e.*, to participate] would not hold if the question was one between us and Germany alone. He thought, however, that if it was ultimately decided to have French co-operation, Russia should come in too."

The India Office has no later information than this.

Germany.—The India Office has not heard of any overtures to Germany on the subject. We know only that in 1909 M. Gwinner informed Sir E. Cassel that the Germans had no objection to Great Britain obtaining more than 50 per cent., and that it was from Hussein Hilmi that the opposition then came. Further, in 1911, Sir G. Lowther wrote (No. 183 of the 22nd March)—"Prominent Germans here have recently been hinting that the Turks will have to accept any arrangement come to between Berlin and London . . . and that we perhaps could secure a more satisfactory arrangement by unofficial pourparlers with Germany." He understood that the German Ambassador (Baron Marschall), who was just going to Berlin, would speak in this sense.

To these facts, which are all that are available, must be added the consideration already mentioned, that it is in Germany's interest that the Gulf section should be built, and she is therefore not likely to place unnecessary difficulties in the way of anyone who will find the money. It is, indeed, probable that she will ask a *quid pro quo*. Whether her demand will be excessive cannot be known until it is made. But it will doubtless be a matter for bargaining, and in any case it is a question whether it is not better to pay Germany for something that is worth having than Turkey for something that is not.

Turkey.—The Turkish attitude may possibly be hostile. For positive information we have only M. Gwinner's statement, quoted above. But it is known that Turkey is very suspicious of British designs in Mesopotamia, and she will doubtless prefer an international control because of the scope which it affords for the time-honoured policy of playing off the various Powers against one another. On the other hand (1) it is strongly to her interest that the line should be built; (2) Sir G. Lowther, in his despatch No. 328 of the 12th May, 1911, has given reasons why she need not herself claim a large share; (3) she will not necessarily be worse off if we obtain 50 per cent. than under her own proposal. She is content now to ask for 25 per cent., and our proposal will leave her to divide 50 per cent. with Germany on the best terms she can get.

Nevertheless, let it be assumed that she will object. The considerations advanced above are intended to show that no harm will result if, as a consequence, the Bagdad–Bussorah Railway question is withdrawn from the present negotiations. It is submitted that His Majesty's Government would have a very good case for withdrawing it. Their own attempts to find a solution will three times have failed, and it is not reasonable to expect them to go on making overtures to Turkey indefinitely. The Turkish representatives, at the private conferences which preceded the official reply, made a great point of the fact that it was to oblige Great Britain that Turkey had induced the Germans to renounce their rights. It will now be for His Majesty's Government, while expressing thanks for this sign of good will, to regret that they do not see their way to accept the concession on the terms on which it is offered. We should say that we have shown our own goodwill by making three attempts to meet the Turkish wishes; we will give a still further proof of it now by withdrawing all objections to the construction of the railway as far as Bussorah, by anyone to whom they choose to entrust it, on the sole condition that they conclude with us a thoroughly satisfactory settlement on the Shatt-el-Arab and in the Gulf (including Mohammerah), in return for which we will further give them the increase of customs duties. It is submitted that we may then fairly expect a full satisfaction of the demands made in the memorandum of the 29th July, 1911, without the necessity of contemplating any further concessions.

But it is at least open to argument that the Turks will not carry their objection to the 50 per cent. arrangement to the point of letting the negotiations break down:

(1.) As has been urged above, it is important to them that the railway should be made;

(2.) They know that, whatever may be the value to us of Turkish friendship, the value to themselves of our friendship is much greater, and if brought gently but firmly up to the point, it is likely that they will think twice before sacrificing it.

VII. *The Procedure to be adopted now.*—If the above views, which are only a development of those expressed in India Office letters of the 3rd and the 29th March, 1911, are accepted, the doubt arises whether it is worth while to press for the 50 per cent. at all; whether it is not better to abandon the railway altogether and devote ourselves entirely to the river and the Gulf on the lines suggested above.

But if it be decided that an attempt should be made to secure 50 per cent., the next question is *how*. This is really a question for the Foreign Office. The India Office have suggested that we should go direct to the German Government, and the Board of Trade in their letter of the 7th April, 1911, recommended that a confidential conference should be held with the authorities of the Bagdad Railway as a preliminary to further negotiations with Turkey.

If it is held to be impossible to go to Germany independently of Turkey, the only course is apparently to inform the Turks that their own proposals being quite inacceptable, we find ourselves unable to negotiate on the basis of the German declaration of the 7th March, 1911, but that if they choose to approach Germany with a view to modifying this declaration so as to give us 50 per cent. and the casting vote, we will use our good offices with Germany and be willing to discuss with her the terms of a settlement on those lines, on the understanding that Turkey concludes an entirely satisfactory arrangement with us in the river and Gulf.

VIII. *The Alternative.*—It is necessary to consider the possibility that if we take either of the lines suggested the Turks will break off the negotiations altogether, as regards both the railway and the Gulf. It is not thought likely, for the reasons suggested under head VI, that this will happen, though they may hint at it by way of bluff. But if they did, it would seem that we should be morally in a very strong position if we could come before the public and say: "We have made every effort to meet the Turks over the question of this railway, but without success. But we do not wish to block it if we can get a settlement of vexatious questions in the Gulf. We have accordingly offered them a free hand for the railway as far as Bussorah (beyond which, if it is ever made, it will never pay) and the increased customs duties in return for a recognition *de jure* of the position in the Gulf, which we have held *de facto* for a century, and they have refused."

Our policy would then be the maintenance, by force if necessary, of that position. We should have to reckon with Turkish hostility both to ourselves and to the Sheikhs of Koweit and Mohammerah. The kind of measures which we should take are

indicated in the Government of India's letter No. 24 of the 15th February, 1912*; and, if driven to it, we should declare a protectorate over Koweit. The strength or weakness of our position would then depend largely on the state of our relations with Germany. But it would seem that Germany would have no ground for taking exception to our action if we could tell her that we had been (and still were) anxious to make an arrangement with her, but had found the Turks so irreconcilable that they would not even accept the free hand for the railway which we had offered them.

This contingency is mentioned merely for the sake of completeness. It is almost incredible that it should occur at a time when more than for many years past Turkish interests clamour for the goodwill of Great Britain.

Rear-Admiral Sir Edmond Slade has read and agrees with all the above remarks.

A. H.

India Office, June 6, 1912.

APPENDIX.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Private.)
(Telegraphic.) *May 20, 1912.*

YOUR private telegram dated the 25th instant: Bagdad Railway.

From an Indian point of view there can be no possible doubt whatever as to relative advantages of the two proposals. We infinitely prefer the proposal for a 50 per cent. participation for ourselves in the Gulf section, leaving the remainder for disposal as Turkey may wish. We have always felt a 20 or 25 per cent. participation must necessarily involve a loss of prestige in regions adjoining Persian Gulf (see secret telegram of the 23rd March, 1911), and that it might possibly become necessary some day to give compensation to France and Russia elsewhere for their continued support of our interests in Mesopotamia. With a 50 per cent. share we can make practically sure against differentiation in rates. In considering all questions affecting Mesopotamia, it is advisable to bear in mind that the situation is a fluid one, and it is difficult to foresee what the position there may be in twenty years' time. Careful as we should therefore be to do all in our power to consolidate our own position and to establish a lien for the future, we feel strongly that no concession in Mesopotamia or elsewhere should be permitted to weaken our position of predominance in the Gulf, where we are able, and should continue to be able, to assert ourselves in maintaining it against all comers.

[24549] No. 168.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 482.)
Sir, *Constantinople, June 5, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's vice-consul at Adana enclosing a report on the Bagdad Railway in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 168.

Vice-Consul Mason to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 2.)
Sir, *Adana, May 24, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to forward a report on the Bagdad Railway in this vilayet, being information gathered from a tour to Baghche last February in the company of Mr. Childs, of the firm of Weston and Childs, architects, Constantinople, to whom I am indebted for much technical matter, and from various sources since then.

I have, &c.
A. MONCK MASON.

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*, * i.e., removal of Turkish light vessel, buoys, &c.; ejection of Turks from Bubiyan and El Kute (including El Bidan); occupation of Fao.

Enclosure 2 in No. 168.

Report by Vice-Consul Mason respecting the Bagdad Railway.

THE stretches of the Bagdad Railway now open to general traffic in this vilayet are those between Mersina and Adana, Dorak and Yenidje, and Adana and Ma'moure (also called Bulgurlu). The line Dorak–Yenidje–Adana–Ma'moure is that recently officially inaugurated in the presence of the Minister of Public Works. The division Yenidje–Adana forms part of the Mersina–Tarsus–Adana Railway; it is a strip of little importance from a traffic point of view, as it merely joins Yenidje to the foot of the Taurus Mountains. On the other hand, the Adana–Ma'moure line runs through some 75 miles of rich cotton and cereal country, where the roads are execrable. Here the new railway cannot fail to prove a great factor in the opening up to commerce of the Adana plain, which is now traversed from end to end by the Bagdad Railroad. The station of Ma'moure (the village itself lies at some miles' distance in the hills) is situated at the furthest north-east limit of the plain; from this point it will climb to Baghtcho, rising 1,500 feet in about 28 miles, where a two small and one long (5 kilom.) tunnel are to pierce the Arslanli Bel.

As regards the general construction of the newly opened lines, it is obvious that no expense has been spared; though the engineers have not, in every case, found themselves able to cope with the natural difficulties of the country they have to deal with. Thus, although the bridges over the Sihun at Adana and over the Pyramus at Missis are justly admired as masterpieces of bridge construction, and although the rail is laid with steel sleepers throughout and is exceptionally heavy, the engineers would not seem to have taken sufficiently into account the force of the floods which are a regular feature of the winter months in this vilayet. Between Adana and Missis I noticed in February last that in no less than four cases—there were doubtless more—culverts and waterways had been completely washed out by recent rains; either the culverts had been made too narrow or too wide and inadequately supported. In this connection I may point out that parts of the Mersina–Adana Railway are at much too low a level, as is evidenced by the fact that the line frequently became impassable to traffic during the rainy season.

The two larger tunnels also appear to be giving the engineers pause, especially that through the Taurus at Bozanti. Reliable information is scarce, but I have it from a good source that the site of this tunnel has not yet been definitely decided upon; it is variously estimated that from three to five years will see the work completed; the latter figure is the more likely to be correct. As to the Arslanli Bel tunnel, the German delegate at Baghtcho, Herr Anders (now acting vice-consul at Adana), told me that excavation was going on at the rate of 2 metres a-day on each working face, but, as during my short day's stay at Baghtcho he avoided showing Mr. Childs or myself the work in progress, I venture to doubt his statement. The boring of the two smaller tunnels between Baghtcho and the Amanus is also progressing, though not very speedily.

Buildings at the new station, which lies nearly a mile to the north of the old and quite outside of the town, are about one-third completed. At Yenidje, Zeitouni, and Chakir-Pacha, on the Mersina–Adana line, they may be said to be ready. In the stations east of Adana work is not far advanced, though even at Baghtcho, more than 20 miles beyond the present railhead, some few buildings are going up. Between Ma'moure and Baghtcho the greater part of the embankment is finished, though in the valley of the Baghtcho there is one large gap of about 2 miles, and at one point there will be necessary a difficult piece of bridging some 100 yards long over the bed of the stream.

At present it must be said that the work is going forward very slowly. In the Taurus this state of things cannot be helped, as progress can only be made during the summer and autumn. Moreover, prices are rising, and with them the labour bill, which even in the beginning was very considerably underestimated. There are rumours that the finances of the railway are at a low ebb, but I see no particular reason to believe it. Be that as it may, the company has recently raised both the passenger and the freight charges on the Adana–Mersina Railway by about 30 per cent.

[24760] No. 169.

Mr. Lightfoot to Sir Clement Hill.—(Received at Foreign Office, June 10.)

549 and 550, Salisbury House, London Wall.
London, June 6, 1912.

My dear Clement,

I AND my nephew, Henry Justice, are working up a scheme for an important railway concession in Asia Minor, but before going further into it should very much like to have information from the Foreign Office to clear up the following points, and it occurs to me to ask you, if you will kindly do so, to put us into the way of getting it. It would, as you will readily understand, be at all events difficult, and possibly useless, for us to walk into the Foreign Office and ask for information unless fortified with an introduction to the proper quarter. Knowing the Foreign Office so well, you might be able to put us into the proper channel. If you like to know more about it, and could give us five minutes' conversation, we would come and see you when and where you appoint.

Yours always,
F. LOWRY LIGHTFOOT.

Enclosure in No. 169.

Points upon which Information is sought.

INFORMATION is desired on the following points in reference to a projected concession by the Ottoman Government for a railway between the port of Yumurtalyk and Suleimanie viâ Lake Van:—

Is there any clause in the convention now granted to the Bagdad Railway which would interfere with the granting of a concession by the Ottoman Government for a main line to run from any port between Mersina and Tripoli (Syria) to cross the Bagdad line?

A point has been raised in connection with article 12 of the Bagdad Convention of 1903. Has this article now been annulled, or, at any rate, does it interfere with the above point?

[22401] No. 170.

Foreign Office to Board of Trade.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 10, 1912.

WITH reference to Foreign Office letter of the 31st ultimo relative to the Bagdad Railway, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith an extract from the "Daily Telegraph" newspaper of the 25th ultimo containing an article by Mr. Perceval Landor on the subject.*

In view of the fact that your department are at present engaged in the consideration of the question of rates, I am to draw special attention to that portion of the article which is to be found under the cross heading, "An Important Point."

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[23469] No. 171.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 10, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, relative to the appointment of a Turkish clerk at the land registration office at Koweit, and to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch on

* No. 126.

the subject which has since been received from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.*

I am to enquire whether, in view of the circumstances of the case as reported by Sir G. Lowther and of the fact that the appointment is not, as believed by His Majesty's consul-general at Bushire, a new one, the Marquess of Crewe will still desire representations to be made to the Turkish Government with regard to it.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[24955] No. 172.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received June* 11.)

India Office, June 10, 1912.

Sir,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 30th May, 1912. Arrangements, as Sir E. Grey is aware, have already been made for the proposed inter-departmental conference.

As regards the question of participation, I am to say that the Marquess of Crewe is not convinced by the arguments in your letter in support of the proposal which, as appears from the *aide-mémoire* presented to Sir E. Grey on the 15th April, 1912 (see also the fourth paragraph of section (*a*) of the joint memorandum by Sir A. Hirtzel and Mr. Parker, dated the 24th April, 1912), the Turkish Government have in effect rejected; and, as the Turkish Government have rejected it, he is at a loss to understand why it is a "subversive departure from the rules of diplomatic procedure" to revert to proposals already submitted in principle to the Turkish Government, whose alternative to them has been found inacceptable by His Majesty's Government.

Two matters of fact mentioned in your letter call for some comment. Lord Crewe was not aware that an assurance, which appears to him to tie to a considerable extent the hands of His Majesty's Government, had been given to the Turkish Ambassador that no negotiation or discussion in connection with the Bagdad Railway would be conducted with the German Government.

Nor had his Lordship been informed that it was in consequence of the inability of His Majesty's Government to obtain a 50 per cent. participation for British interests that the proposals now before the Ottoman Government were made. The reasons for the change in their policy are not on record, and he does not remember to have seen any indication that an attempt had been unsuccessfully made to obtain a 50 per cent. participation; on the contrary, it appeared from Sir E. Grey's despatches No. 123, dated the 6th April, 1911, to Sir F. Bertie, and No. 105, dated the 10th April, 1911, to Sir G. Buchanan, that France and Russia at all events would offer no serious objection, while Sir G. Lowther's despatch No. 328, dated the 12th May, 1911, gave reasons why the Turkish share might reasonably be a small one. Germany therefore remained, and if his Lordship is correct in understanding your letter to mean that Germany has been approached and has refused, his suggestion was, of course, beside the point.

With reference to the opinion of the Viceroy quoted in your letter, I am directed to enclose copy of a further telegram† which has been received from his Excellency on the subject, and in which Lord Crewe concurs. I am to add that both telegrams are of a private nature, and to ask that they may not be quoted again in official communications or included in any printed collection of official papers.

As regards El Katr, I am to say that the proposals of His Majesty's Government for a settlement of the Persian Gulf questions were very carefully prepared after an inter-departmental conference, were part of the papers submitted to the Standing Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and were in substance approved by that body. There was no suggestion at the time that they contained any superfluous demands to be given away in negotiation, or that they were other than what was believed to be the irreducible minimum which His Majesty's Government could with due regard to their interests accept. Lord Crewe will consider whether from the Indian point of view they can be modified, but he does not expect to find any material alteration practicable.

In connection with El Katr especially, I am to invite attention to section 3 of the report of the Standing Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, dated

* No. 151. † Not printed.

the 14th July, 1911. A copy of a telegram, dated the 10th June, 1912, addressed to the Government of India on this subject, is enclosed.

His Lordship notes Sir E. Grey's decision with regard to Mohammerah, which has doubtless been taken after consideration of the Government of India's telegram, dated the 24th May, copy of which was furnished to your department on the 25th May. I am to add, with reference to the last paragraph of your letter, that, while Lord Crewe would wish to be consulted before any concessions are made to Turkey, he must regard the form of the negotiations and the procedure to be adopted as matters pertaining to the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

Enclosure in No. 172.

The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, June* 10, 1912.

NEGOTIATIONS regarding Bagdad Railway.

I request that you will consider, on basis of the memorandum of the 20th July last to Turkish Government, the reply of the Porte, and the joint minute by Mr. Parker and Sir A. Hirtzel, what concessions, should such prove necessary to save negotiations, you would be prepared to make to Turkey in territories on the Gulf littoral. Foreign Office have been informed by me that no stipulations to be waived by way of concession in course of negotiation were included in our conditions regarding El Katr, but that those conditions were drafted as statement of necessary minimum. In order to meet situation in event of breakdown of negotiations His Majesty's Government must clearly be provided with a definite alternative policy.

[24958] No. 173.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received June* 11.)

India Office, June 10, 1912.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram, dated the 5th June, which has been received from the Government of India regarding the Turkish occupation of Kasr-as-Subaih.

The place in question is admittedly outside the region which His Majesty's Government are prepared to claim for the Sheikh of Koweit, and from paragraph 230 (*e*) of the diary of the Persian Gulf Residency for March 1912 (copy of which was furnished to your department on the 28th May, 1912), it appears that the sheikh himself does not now claim it.

Further, the Marquess of Crewe does not understand the minute of Sir A. Hirtzel and Mr. Parker to suggest that a protest should be made against any Turkish action in the district of El Katif in which their sovereignty has been admitted by His Majesty's Government, *i.e.*, from the southernmost point of Koweit territory to Ojeir. The passage to which the Government of India refer relates, in his view, only to the denial by the Turkish representatives of the assurances given orally by the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1870 and of the claims based thereon by His Majesty's Government in respect of Bahrein and the coast south of Ojeir.

His Lordship therefore regrets that he does not find in the Turkish occupation of Kasr-as-Subaih any ground for legitimate protest.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

Enclosure in No. 173.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *June* 5, 1912.

REFERENCE is invited to your telegram dated 28th August, 1911. Appointment of Sheikh Abdullah bin Ali of Al Bu Ainain as Mudir of Kasr-as-Subaih, and the dispatch to that settlement of a Turkish guard of six men, are reported by resident, Persian Gulf. He also states that on Fridays and special occasions the Turkish flag is flown at Kasr-as-Subaih. Protest might be made to Turkey on this subject, as suggested in minute by Mr. Parker and Sir A. Hirtzel, dated 24th April, 1912, paragraph 2 (*a*). At the time that assurance was given in 1872, the Al Bu Ainain were an independent tribe.

[25080] No. 174.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received June* 12.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of enclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 23rd May, 1912, relative to the Shatt-el-Arab.

India Office, June 11, 1912.

Enclosure 1 in No. 174.

Government of India to Naval Commander-in-chief.

April 24, 1912.

IN continuation of Marine Department letter, dated the 29th May, 1911, I am directed to forward the accompanying copies of telegrams from and to the most Honourable the Secretary of State for India in connection with the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab river,* and to request that your Excellency will be so good as to favour the Government of India with your views on the subject as early as possible.

2. I am also to forward, for your Excellency's information, copies of the correspondence noted in the margin* regarding the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab river.

Enclosure 2 in No. 174.

Naval Commander-in-chief to Government of India.

May 6, 1912.

IN reply to Marine Department letter of 24th ultimo relative to the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab river, I have the honour to report, for the information of his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council, that I am of opinion that every endeavour should be made to settle the question of the Turkish and Persian frontiers on the Shatt-el-Arab, so that no disturbance of the line which has been observed locally for more than sixty years shall take place. If the Home Government are forced to agree to the frontier the Turkish Government are claiming, it will place the Palace of the Sheikh of Mohammerah and a large tract of country which has always been regarded as belonging to the sheikh in Turkish territory, and this could not but fail to have a far-reaching effect on our position with the various sheikhs in the Persian Gulf, who for many years have been accustomed to look to the British Government to see that their interests are safeguarded. The Sheikhs of Mohammerah and Koweit are on very intimate terms, and our relations with the latter would undoubtedly suffer, and we should be considered by everyone to have sacrificed the former to the Turk, who is generally disliked by them all. That news travels fast in the Gulf I know from several very pertinent questions asked me by the Sultan of Muscat.

* Not printed.

2. As far as the control of the waters of the Shatt-el-Arab is concerned, there appears to be no objection to the Turkish proposal of a purely Ottoman Riverain Commission with a British member in Ottoman employ, provided suitable guarantees can be obtained that the British member shall be appointed by the British Government, that his position on the commission shall be a real one with an effective voice, and that no other foreigner shall be allowed on it. It might perhaps be politic to agree to this, provided the Turkish Government agree to the frontier line as now locally observed, influence being brought to bear on the Persian Government to concur in the arrangement.

[25167] No. 175.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received June* 13.)

(No. 83.)

Sir,

Athens, June 7, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Sofoulis, who has been living quietly at Athens since the events at Samos in 1908, which led to his condemnation to death by default (see Mr. Young's despatch No. 143 of the 28th July and previous correspondence in that year), is stated by this morning's papers to be returning to-day to the island, the successor of his arch-enemy Kopassis having apparently issued a decree of amnesty.

I have, &c.

F. ELLIOT.

[25672] No. 176.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received June* 17.)

(No. 135. Confidential.)

Sir,

Rome, May 29, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to report that on returning to Rome I took an early opportunity of seeing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and asking him whether he had anything to tell me as having occurred during my brief absence. The Marquis di San Giuliano said he did not think the situation had materially changed since I left Rome. I endeavoured by certain indirect questions to elicit whether he had reason to believe that Germany was likely to modify her policy at Constantinople, but all that I could extract from him was that things which had been impossible for Baron Marschall to contemplate might not be so impossible for his successor.

I then told him that I had during my short visit to England convinced myself that there was a great and growing feeling of irritation there on account of the treatment to which British shipping had been subjected in the Red Sea and elsewhere. There was an increasing number of cases in which vessels had been arrested and detained under suspicion of carrying contraband, a suspicion which investigation generally proved to be entirely without foundation, and not only was the loss and inconvenience entailed a serious matter, but almost equally serious was the condition of insecurity and want of confidence which such procedure entailed. We had just had to intervene in a case where a ship in water ballast had had, in consequence of a breakdown in her boilers, to take temporary shelter in the blockaded area near Hodeidah, with the result that she was arrested and conveyed to Massowah, and though her release had now been obtained it had taken some twelve days to accomplish this, a delay which no doubt would entail the loss of the freight she was to load at Bombay. We had, in my opinion, shown great forbearance and every disposition to recognise the difficulties of belligerents, but it was surely unwise to provoke a spirit of irritation which the recent captures went far to justify.

His Excellency did not dispute my contention, and said he had continual difficulties with the Ministry of Marine, and that the naval officer, whose zeal outran discretion, gave him constant preoccupation and anxiety. He had impressed this on the President of the Council and had obtained the issue of very definite instructions, but he would, in view of what I had told him, recur to the subject at once and insist on the necessity of adopting a reasonable attitude.

The Permanent Under-Secretary, whom I saw a little later, made the same complaint of the naval attitude, and said he had pointed out very clearly that Italy was suffering from these indiscretions, because she was losing general sympathy, was subjected to the humiliation of having to admit herself in the wrong, and was materially damaged by having to pay compensation. At the same time, he observed that in eight months of hostilities there had only been some half-dozen cases, and, in view of the vast extension of British shipping interests, it was satisfactory that there had been so few.

I then told the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the other point which caused me anxiety was the resentment of the Mussulman communities, especially of those that were British subjects, at the difficulties and risks which the conditions in the Red Sea entailed upon pilgrims. His Excellency protested against the idea that any real difficulties would be imposed by Italian action on *bonâ fide* pilgrims, and referred to the assurances which had been given to us. I said we did not doubt the good faith of these assurances, but the shippers engaged in the pilgrim traffic were alarmed by the treatment to which unoffending vessels had been subjected, and it was difficult to make the Mussulman communities understand that Italy was prepared to facilitate the pilgrimage. Some further utterance in this sense might have a good effect, and I asked him whether he could not arrange to have a question asked in the Chamber, to which he could reply by explaining the measures which the Italian Government were prepared to take to prevent unreasonable interference with the pilgrim traffic.

His Excellency replied he would willingly have adopted such a suggestion, but there was a practical difficulty in the way. The Government had arranged with all parties in the Chamber that there should be no questions or interpellations on any issue connected with the war. The suggestion had been met in a patriotic spirit, and the Government had thereby been spared many embarrassments. Were he to do what I suggested it would be to some extent a departure from this agreement, and it would be difficult to expect others to respect it if the Government themselves did not do so. He would, however, consider whether something might not be done to notify through the press their attitude with regard to the pilgrimage, and to relieve Mussulman anxiety through some public announcement of this character.

I have, &c.
RENNELL RODD.

[25548] No. 177.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received June* 17.)

(No. 488.)
Sir, *Constantinople, June* 8, 1912.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 226 of the 28th May last, I have the honour to forward herewith a memorandum from the commercial attaché to this embassy reporting on the present negotiations between the customs and the Bagdad Railway authorities as to construction, &c., of new premises at Bagdad.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 177.

Memorandum by Mr. Weakley respecting Bagdad Customs.

[Foreign Office despatch No. 226 of the 28th May, 1912, transmitting letter from the Board of Trade of the 24th May, 1912.]

FROM enquiries made at the customs, it would appear that, beyond an exchange of views between the department and M. Eugenin, the director-general of the Anatolian and Bagdad Railways, no attempt has yet been made to enter into serious negotiations relative to the construction of the new customs premises and warehouses at Bagdad. The railway company have arranged to prepare plans of the proposed buildings, and, until these have been submitted to and examined by the administration, no further steps are likely to be taken for the present.

It is not possible therefore, at the present moment, to define the basis on which negotiations will take place; I understand, however, that the customs are disposed to agree to hand over all the warehousing of goods—goods for local consumption as well as those in transit—to the railway company, in accordance with the stipulations of articles 23 and 24 of the Bagdad Railway Convention of the 5th March, 1903, but on the condition—

1. That goods intended for Bagdad are transported across the river to the town side by the railway company free of charge.
2. That goods shall enjoy free warehousing for the first eight days after landing and storing.
3. That storage dues shall only be levied after that period.
4. That the "ardioh," or progressive warehousing charge levied in customs depôts, shall be abolished as far as Bagdad is concerned.

The railway company apparently claim their right under article 24 of the convention, to erect and maintain bonded warehouses on any section of the railway; the question seems to be a debatable one, and turns on the interpretation of the Turkish text of the article. This matter will be gone into, as well as the question of the building of the new customs offices, the expense of which will presumably be borne by the administration.

[25598] No. 178.

Viscount Kitchener to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received June* 17.)

(No. 66.)
Sir, *Cairo, June* 9, 1912.

WITH reference to Sir G. Lowther's despatch No. 215 of the 12th of March last, a printed copy of which in the "Asiatic Turkey and Arabia" Print Series reached me on the 5th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a short memorandum containing information from a reliable source respecting the present position of El Idrisi in Asyr.

From this it would appear that the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs takes a somewhat unduly optimistic view of the situation.

I have, &c.
KITCHENER.

Enclosure in No. 178.

Memorandum respecting affairs in Asyr.

AN agent, who has recently returned from a journey in Southern Arabia in the course of which he visited Mohammed El Idrisi, gives the following account of his journey:—

From Jedda he coasted southwards to El Wahda, a small harbour near Gizan. Here he learnt that Idrisi had gone south in the direction of Loheiya and was at that moment at Harad, north-east of Loheiya, which agent reached on the 25th April.

Idrisi is a man 36 years of age, of medium stature, studied in the Yemen, Mecca, Tripoli and Cairo, of great intelligence and force of character; very religious. His intentions are to purify the religion of Islam, to drive away the Turks from Asyr and relieve the country from their injustice and misrule. When he has done this, to take Mecca and Medina and establish there an Arabian Khalifate.

He has a great number of followers who are absolutely devoted to him, and agent states that in case of emergency he could raise between 100,000 and 300,000 men.

At the moment he has under arms about 46,000 tribesmen. 25,000 of these are with him at Harad, 6,000 are besieging Loheiya and 15,000 are distributed between the following ports:—

Shokeik, El Wasm, El Berk, Halli, and at Maheil, inland near Abha.

The Turkish regular forces in the Sanjak number roughly 15,000, assisted by 6,500 friendly Arabs. The allegiance of the latter is compelled chiefly by fear.

Idrisi is said to possess 70 big guns of various description, 20 of which he has

recently received from the Italians, the remainder having been taken from the Turks at various times.

He has thousands of rifles and his supply of ammunition is plentiful. A large number of sailing boats which he possesses are used for transporting arms and ammunition from Jibuti and elsewhere.

It is undoubted that he has accepted arms and ammunition from the Italians, but he refused money which was also offered him.

He has accepted this aid from the Italians on the ground that the Turks are their common enemy.

He has clearly intimated to the Italians, however, that he will not be responsible for the safety of any Italian who chooses to land, therefore the statments published in the Press that Italian officers are with him are untrue.

In Idrisi's camp there are a number of Abyssinians, Sudanese and Turkish soldiers who have deserted, some Abyssinians and Turks being employed as artillerymen.

Idrisi's capital is Sabia, a large town 6 hours north-east of Gizan.

His influence is so great in Asyr that women are said not to lament their sons who die fighting in his cause; and his fame is such that delegates have come to him from Nejd, Hadramut, El Jof, Mecca, Medina and even Abyssinia offering help.

One by one he has overcome opposition and seized all the ports between Kunfida and Loheiya, the latter of which he is now blockading and purposely starving the garrison into surrender. On its capitulation he intends moving north and laying siege to Abha and Kunfida.

His relations with the Imam Yehia of El Yemen.

Prior to the conclusion of peace between the Imam and the Turks, his relations with the former were decidedly friendly and there was no doubt an understanding between them to co-operate in driving the Turks from their respective countries. Since the Imam has made peace the Turks have impressed upon the Imam the disadvantages to him of Idrisi's rise to power. It is thought, however, that the Imam is not quite confident as to his future being entirely dependent on the Turks, and consequently has not whole-heartedly thrown in his lot with them, especially as a great many of his tribesmen are in sympathy with Idrisi, and further, do not altogether care for the conditions of the peace which has been concluded.

In dealing with the latter his hand has been strengthened by the acceptance of Idrisi of Christian aid, and he has sent about 300 of his men to the assistance of the Turks at Loheiya.

On receipt of the news that Idrisi was in league with the Italians, the Imam sent out a deputation of Ulema to ascertain the truth. Idrisi informed the deputation that he had been at war with the Turks long before the Italians commenced hostilities, that he was not fighting the Turks because they were Moslems, but because they were cruel, unjust and irreligious, that the acceptance of arms made no difference in his attitude towards the Moslem world, and would give the Italians no shadow of claim on him or his country.

It is said that most of the Ulema returned convinced that Idrisi had every reason to accept such assistance.

From this and other information it is clear that the Turkish position in southern Arabia is not so favourable as is made out at Constantinople, and that their hold on the country has been distinctly weakened.

June 9, 1912.

[25552] No. 179.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 493.)

Sir, *Constantinople, June* 10, 1912.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 181 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah respecting the visit of the Valis of Bagdad and Bussorah to Fao.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 179.

Consul Crow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 30.)

Sir, *Bussorah, May* 18, 1912.

WITH reference to my telegrams Nos. 62 and 65, I have the honour to report that the Vali of Bagdad with the Vali of Bussorah and the commodore left in the "Marmaris" on the 14th instant for Fao, and returned on the following day at noon after they had inspected the fort.

It is understood from the Turkish military officers here that the Vali of Bagdad proposes to increase the strength of the Fao garrison from 100 to 150. According to my information from Fao on the 15th March the garrison had been reduced to twenty men, and, from a later report from the same source on the 9th April, there has been no further alteration of the force at the fort.

The two valis visited the Club of Union and Progress at Bussorah on the 15th May, and the Vali of Bagdad is reported to have made a speech, inviting the members to co-operate in order to strengthen the influence of the committee. He is said to have remarked, that the committee of the Ittilafjis was injurious to the interests of the country, and that they should be punished "not with whips but with iron clubs," and he hoped they would shortly be so punished. His Excellency afterwards repaired to the house of Abdul Wahab Kartas at Seraji, one of the Committee of Union and Progress delegates to Parliament, and dined there. On the following day he proceeded to Zobeir, and in the evening returned to Bagdad by Turkish steamer.

I have, &c.

F. E. CROW.

[25555] No. 180.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 496.)

Sir, *Constantinople, June* 12, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 396 of the 8th of last month on the subject of Messrs. Lynch's barges on the Tigris, I have the honour to report that on the 31st May I received a telegram from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, stating that the vali addressed a letter to him on the 29th of that month, in which permission is expressly given to Lynch to tow two barges for the sole and exclusive purpose of carrying 3,800 tons of accumulated cargo.

(Confidential.)

Mr. Crow did not state in his telegram from under what circumstances this unexpected facility was accorded by the local authorities. It is almost certain that it would not have been granted without the express permission of the Central Government, with which, however, I have had no exchange of communications on the subject. From private information which has reached me since receiving Mr. Crow's telegram, I have reason to believe that the Ministry of Commerce here was considering the question of Lynch's position on the Tigris and the whole question of the congestion of traffic on the river some weeks ago. It seems probable that the vali's communications to Mr. Crow may have been the upshot of this examination of the question at head-quarters, and that the permission now granted may be the result of independent information as to the necessity for increased means of transport, combined with a desire to conciliate His Majesty's Government by observing a less suspicious attitude than heretofore towards Messrs. Lynch.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

[25303] No. 181.*

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 251.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June* 17, 1912.

YOUR despatch No. 252 of 5th June: Samos (Paris only).

The Italian Ambassador here has stated that the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs has authorised him to give an assurance that if the Turkish garrison at Samos were withdrawn from the island it would not be molested during its passage to the mainland.

You should enquire of Government to which you are accredited whether they consider it advisable that we should inform the Porte of this assurance. If we did so, and the garrison were withdrawn, we should have to be sure that the Italian Government will not occupy the island but will respect its special position.

(Repeated to Rome, No. 204, and Constantinople, No. 330.)

[25937] No. 182.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 158.)
Sir, *Posillipo, June* 15, 1912.

ON receipt of your despatch No. 90 of the 3rd ultimo I addressed a note to the Italian Government, calling attention to the fact that His Majesty's Government were informed that the pilgrim traffic in the Red Sea would probably begin in June and continue until March, and requesting that instructions might be sent to the Italian officer commanding in the Red Sea in a similar sense to those already given in respect of the months of October, November, and December.

I have now the honour to transmit herewith a translation of a note which I have received in reply, stating that instructions in the desired sense have been given.

I have, &c.
RENNELL RODD.

Enclosure in No. 182.

The Marquis di San Giuliano to Sir R. Rodd.

(Translation.)
Sir, *Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Rome, June* 16, 1912.

IN your note of the 10th ultimo your Excellency called my attention to the fact that pilgrimages to Mecca do not take place only in the months of October, November, and December, but really from the month of June to the month of March, and you expressed the wish that, within the limits allowed by the course of the military operations against Turkey, the Royal Government should take into favourable consideration the suggestions of the British Government, and give orders that no obstacle should be placed in the way of vessels carrying pilgrims to Mecca not only during the months of October, November, and December, as the Royal Government has already promised, but also during the other months above specified.

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Royal Ministry of Marine, to whom I hastened to communicate your Excellency's note, has informed me, under date of the 5th instant, that instructions have been issued to the commander of the naval forces in the Red Sea to the effect that, within the limits laid down in the notification of blockade, every possible facility shall from now onwards be accorded to vessels carrying pilgrims on their way to Mecca.

I have, &c.
SAN GIULIANO.

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* Also to Mr. O'Beirne (No. 510).

[25992] No. 183.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 192.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June* 17, 1912.

LEBANON.

French consul-general at Beirout has arrived here, and, by instructions from his Ambassador, has begun informal discussion of reforms with an official of Grand Vizierate. I am kept fully informed of what passes, but I should be glad to receive instructions foreshadowed in your telegram No. 300 of 23rd May.

[26083] No. 184.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 80. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Paris, June* 18, 1912.

WITH regard to your telegram No. 251 of yesterday evening, informing me of the communication which the Italian Ambassador in London is authorised to make to His Majesty's Government regarding Samos, I have the honour to state that M. Tittoni made an identic communication to M. Poincaré.

I was informed this morning by M. Paléologue that M. Poincaré reminded the Italian Ambassador that, subsequently to the declaration of war, the Turkish garrison at Samos had been increased without any objection being made by the protecting Powers, and that the island's position had undergone no change, but his Excellency stated that he would consider M. Tittoni's communication.

M. Paléologue told me that reliable information has reached the French Government from a confidential source that the Italian Government's suggestion regarding Samos is put forward with the object of securing a moral victory over the Turks, and that in the event of its being entertained by the Powers and of the Porte's refusing to act upon it, it will be the prelude to an application from Italy to the protecting Powers claiming a free hand in Samos unless they require the Porte to withdraw their garrison from the island.

I gather from the political director that the suggested communication to the Porte does not commend itself to M. Poincaré. I shall see him to-morrow evening.

It is understood by the French Government, though they have no official information to that effect, that the Russian Government received the Italian proposal some time ago, but took no action, and refrained from making any positive answer to it.

If an undertaking were given by the Italian Government not to occupy Samos, and to respect the special position of the island, and the Turkish troops were withdrawn, to what troops would the restoration of order be entrusted in the event of the inhabitants declaring the union of Samos with Greece or of disturbances occurring in the island?

[26183] No. 185.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 19.)

Sir, *India Office, June* 18, 1912.

IN continuation of my letter of the 10th instant, regarding the Bagdad Railway and connected questions, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram that has been received from the Government of India as to the possibility of making concessions to the Turkish Government in the Persian Gulf with a view to arriving at a settlement of outstanding questions.

The Marquess of Crewe desires me to remark that in the proposals that have been put before the Turkish Government Great Britain is claiming nothing new, but is

asking merely for the recognition of the position which she has built up for herself there. It is rather Turkey who desires to alter the *status quo* by the assertion of claims which she has never been, and is not now, in a position to enforce. This fact seems to put His Majesty's Government on strong ground morally for insisting upon full satisfaction, if so valuable a consideration as the increased customs duties is to be given in return.

If it be urged that an equally satisfactory result could be secured by a convention strictly defining the spheres of the two countries in the Gulf, Lord Crewe has as little confidence as have the Government of India that the semi-independent local Turkish authorities would adhere to its provisions, or that the Porte would be able or willing to compel them to do so except under such constant diplomatic pressure as could not fail to disturb the relations of the two countries. The intrigues of the Turks with tribes on the British side of the demarcated frontier near Aden and the difficulty which His Majesty's Government have experienced in securing the elementary rights of British subjects at Bagdad are examples, and his Lordship fears that such a convention would merely perpetuate the state of things which it is desired to end.

On the other hand, it must be recognised that the only alternative to a friendly settlement of these questions is the adoption of a much more resolute attitude in the Persian Gulf than His Majesty's Government have hitherto thought desirable. The nature of the measures which in certain eventualities it might be necessary to take are indicated in the Government of India's secret letter dated the 15th February last, copy of which was enclosed in my letter of the 7th March.

With this alternative in mind, Lord Crewe concurs in the views expressed by the Government of India.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

Enclosure in No. 185.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *June* 13, 1912.

NEGOTIATIONS regarding Bagdad Railway. See your telegram dated the 10th instant.

We consider that our conditions as to El Katr contain no margin for surrender, representing as they do the irreducible minimum. As we have no confidence that any conditions imposed, however rigidly defined, will be adhered to by the Porte, we feel strongly the necessity of the complete removal from the peninsula of Turkish troops. No concession can be suggested by us that can be made with safety to interests of India and Great Britain, and rather than that any concession should be made to Turkey in the Gulf we would prefer to see negotiations broken off. Strenuous opposition should be offered in our interests to any step tending to consolidate Turkish position on Persian Gulf littoral.

[26206] No. 186.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 218.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *St. Petersburgh, June* 19, 1912.

SAMOS. Your telegram No. 251 of 17th June to Sir F. Bertie.

Aide-mémoire received from Russian Government states that they have not yet been approached by Italian Government regarding withdrawal of the Turkish garrison, but that should the occasion arise they would consider it desirable to proceed in way suggested by you before communicating any assurances whatever to Turkish Government.

[25992] No. 187.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 337.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June* 19, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 192 of 17th June: Lebanon reforms.

We were awaiting your detailed observations on Council's petition (see my telegram No. 300 of 23rd May), but we see no reason to dissent from conclusions of His Majesty's consul-general at Beirout, and you were authorised in my telegram No. 307 of 29th May to discuss reforms with Turkish Government on those lines, subject to any modifications which you may consider desirable and to reference home of any point on which you may be in doubt. Last two enclosures in your despatch No. 439 of 28th May are being returned by post.

[23111] No. 188.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 212.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 19, 1912.

THE Russian Ambassador read to Sir A. Nicolson on the 23rd May a telegram from the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the following effect:—

The Italian Government desired to call the attention of the Russian Government to the abnormal state of things in Samos, which Italy recognised was under the special protection of France, England, and Russia, and which should, therefore, be without a Turkish garrison and consequently treated as neutral. But there were in the island a considerable Turkish garrison and a depôt of munitions of war.

M. Sazonof wished to have my opinion as to whether the three Powers should not lay before the Turkish Government the alternative either of withdrawing the garrison, and thus re-establishing a normal condition of affairs, or of allowing Italy a free hand to deal with Samos as she thought necessary.

Sir A. Nicolson told Count Benckendorff that we had received no communication from Italy on the subject—that it would, in his opinion, be rather a delicate matter to suggest to Turkey the withdrawal of her garrison, as, even supposing she agreed, we should then have to approach Italy for the purpose of obtaining a safe conduct for the garrison—and all this would constitute an interference in warlike operations; Turkey might decline to withdraw her garrison, and we might have difficulties with Italy as to a safe conduct, &c. Moreover, Samos was not under the special protection of the three Powers, and Sir A. Nicolson explained to Count Benckendorff the nature of the relations between the island and Turkey. In any case, His Majesty's Government would wait till they received a communication from Italy, and they could then consult with Paris and St. Petersburgh.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[23112] No. 189.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. O'Beirne.

(No. 225.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 20, 1912.

COUNT BENCKENDORFF mentioned again on the 30th May the question of Samos, and Sir A. Nicolson told him that the Italian Government had not approached His Majesty's Government on the subject. Sir A. Nicolson added that before reply to M. Sazonof I might wish to enquire of Paris what were the views of the French Government.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[24760] No. 190.

Foreign Office to Mr. Lightfoot.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 21, 1912.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 6th instant to Sir Clement Hill, which has been communicated by him to this Office, relative to your desire to obtain from the Turkish Government a concession for the construction of a railway from Yumurtalyk to Suleimanie by way of Lake Van, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that since the year 1909 a comprehensive scheme, put forward by an American syndicate, for the construction of a network of railways in Asia Minor has been before the Turkish Government. One of the lines included in the project is that for the construction of which you desire to obtain the concession.

The syndicate in question ask for no kilometric guarantee in connection with their lines, but demand the right to work all minerals discovered within a certain radius of the railway.

A British syndicate are also anxious to obtain a concession, not for the construction of railways, but for the exploitation of minerals in the same region.

In face of a scheme so comprehensive as that of the American syndicate above mentioned, to which, moreover, the Turkish Government are to a certain extent already committed, the agents of the British group have found it impossible to make any progress in their own negotiations at Constantinople, and His Majesty's Ambassador has been driven to the conclusion that he cannot at present usefully take any steps to further the British interests involved.

In these circumstances, Sir E. Grey has little hope that your own scheme, which also forms a part of the American project, can obtain favourable consideration on the part of the Turkish Government, but he will send copies of the present correspondence to Constantinople for the views of His Majesty's Ambassador.

I am to suggest that you should name a time when it would be convenient to you to call at this Office and discuss with a member of the Eastern Department the general question and the particular points raised in the enclosure in your letter to Sir Clement Hill.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[26470] No. 191.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 22.)

Sir, *India Office, June 20, 1912.*

WITH reference to your letter dated the 31st May, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram, dated the 7th June, that has been received from the Government of India dealing with various questions connected with the Turco-Persian frontier, which are now under consideration.

It will be seen that the Government of India concur generally in the arguments advanced by Sir P. Cox in various telegrams. As however they do not develop them, the Marquess of Crewe sees no reason to change the opinions expressed in previous correspondence and in the telegram sent to the Viceroy on the 1st June, in accordance with Mr. Abrahams' letter dated the 28th May, as modified by your letter above quoted. The Government of India, it will be observed, have not understood the purpose of that telegram, which was to correct the very misapprehensions which they appear to regard as its sufficient answer. But it seems unnecessary to pursue the controversy further.

I am to add that Lord Crewe agrees in principle with the Government of India, that the case as regards the land frontier of Mohammerah up to Hawizeh is sufficiently strong to be argued on its merits, but, as stated in Mr. Abrahams' letter dated the 4th instant, he is content to leave it to Sir E. Grey to select the method of obtaining the result which both departments desire (that is to say, the [land] frontier as locally observed), though he would wish to be consulted before any particular settlement is adopted.

Copy of a letter from the Commander-in-chief, East Indies Station, is also enclosed.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

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Enclosure 1 in No. 191.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *June 7, 1912.*

SHATT-EL-ARAB.

See your telegram dated 8th ultimo. Foreign Office memorandum has been considered by us, together with view expressed in telegram dated 5th ultimo and two telegrams dated 23rd ultimo from resident, Persian Gulf, and in resident's letter dated 21st ultimo and its enclosure. All these documents were sent to London direct. Arguments advanced by resident both as to rights in Shatt-el-Arab and boundary of Mohammerah have our general concurrence. We will reply later in connection with Bagdad Railway as to buoys and lighting in approach of Shatt-el-Arab (see your telegram dated 14th ultimo). Resident's letter, dated 21st ultimo, sent direct to Secretary, Political Department, had apparently not reached you when you telegraphed on 1st instant. Point raised in your telegram of that date is dealt with in note (6) appended to resident's letter, to which we have nothing to add. With regard to boundary, it appears from telegram addressed to Foreign Office on 7th ultimo by His Majesty's Ambassador, Constantinople, that Turkey merely wishes to keep claim as to Mohammerah for purpose of bargaining elsewhere. It is desirable, in our opinion, to contest this claim on its merits, and any concession in Gulf, as compensation for Turkey's admission of *status quo* at Mohammerah, is strongly deprecated by us in the interests of India.

(Repeated to Resident, Persian Gulf.)

Enclosure 2 in No. 191.

Government of India to Naval Commander-in-chief.

April 24, 1912.

IN continuation of Marine Department letter dated the 29th May, 1911, I am directed to forwarded the accompanying copies of telegrams from and to the Most Honourable the Secretary of State for India in connection with the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab River,* and to request that your Excellency will be so good as to favour the Government of India with your views on the subject as early as possible.

2. I am also to forward, for your Excellency's information, copies of the correspondence noted in the margin,* regarding the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab River.

Enclosure 3 in No. 191.

Naval Commander-in-chief to Government of India.

May 6, 1912.

IN reply to Marine Department letter of the 24th ultimo, relative to the navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab River, I have the honour to report, for the information of his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council, that I am of opinion that every endeavour should be made to settle the question of the Turkish and Persian frontiers on the Shatt-el-Arab, so that no disturbance of the line which has been observed locally for more than sixty years shall take place. If the Home Government are forced to agree to the frontier the Turkish Government are claiming, it will place the palace of the Sheikh of Mohammerah, and a large tract of country which has always been regarded as belonging to the sheikh, in Turkish territory; and this could not but fail to have a far-reaching effect on our position with the various sheikhs in the Persian Gulf, who for many years have been accustomed to look to the British Government to see that their interests are safeguarded. The Sheikhs of Mohammerah and Koweit are on very intimate terms, and our relations with the latter would undoubtedly suffer, and we should be considered by everyone to have sacrificed the former to the Turk, who is generally disliked by them all. That news travels fast in the Gulf I know from several very pertinent questions asked me by the Sultan of Muscat.

2. As far as the control of the waters of the Shatt-el-Arab is concerned there appears to be no objection to the Turkish proposal of a purely Ottoman–Riverain con-

* Not printed.

mission with a British member in Ottoman employ, provided suitable guarantees can be obtained that the British member shall be appointed by the British Government, that his position on the commission shall be a real one with an effective voice, and that no other foreigner shall be allowed on it. It might perhaps be politic to agree to this provided the Turkish Government agree to the frontier line as now locally observed, influence being brought to bear on the Persian Government to concur in the arrangement.

[26557] No. 192.

Treasury to Foreign Office.—(Received June 22.)

Sir, *Treasury Chambers, June 21, 1912.*

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury your letter of the 13th instant and its enclosures relative to the provision of two dioptric lanterns for the residency at Bushire.

In reply, I am to request that Secretary Sir E. Grey will cause my Lords to be informed whether it is intended that one-half of the expenditure involved shall fall upon Imperial funds. If so, their Lordships' sanction will be required for the expenditure, and they will be glad to be informed for what purpose this installation is required, and in what circumstances it was considered necessary for Treasury sanction to be anticipated.

I am, &c.
T. L. HEATH.

[26563] No. 193.

Mr. Lynch to Mr. Maxwell.—(Received June 22.)

Dear Mr. Maxwell, *33, Pont Street, London, June 21, 1912.*

REVERTING to our conversation of yesterday, I enclose a paper which I read last year before the Central Asian Society,* and would beg to refer you to pp. 9 and 10, which have reference to the branch line between Bagdad (Sadijeh) and Khanikin. The Bagdad-Khanikin trade route into Persia has been developed exclusively by Englishmen, practically by members of my own family, and the value of British goods conveyed by this route amounts to over 1,000,000*l.* a year—a figure which compares with under 100,000*l.* for the trade of all other European countries, including Germany.

I think you will admit that I have a hereditary claim to put in a word for the future of this British trade. I do hope that our Government will do their very utmost to safeguard this trade and also the trade between Trebizond and Tabreez.

It is true that the Bagdad Railway Company, having secured the surplus of the Ottoman Public Debt, are probably in a position to complete the railway to Bagdad and the Persian frontier. But I understand that the greater part of the railway bonds are still in the safes of the Deutsche Bank, and naturally the German promoters are most anxious to get these bonds taken up in France and England. I am certain, therefore, that they would stretch a good many points in order to secure the goodwill of England and France.

Now, for us it is vital to obtain an effective voice in the management of the line between Bagdad and the Persian frontier. Bagdad is already the terminus of our river-borne trade; it will soon be connected with the Mediterranean by the Bagdad-Mosul line, and later probably by a line along the Euphrates. Bagdad is therefore destined to be the reservoir into which several main streams of commerce will pour. The bulk of the goods will be goods in transit for Persia, and it is of the utmost importance that perfectly equal treatment should be secured for British goods as compared with goods from Germany or other countries. This can only be secured by financial participation in the branch from Bagdad to the Persian frontier. Nor can I see why the Germans should refuse such participation. It would greatly help them to have Great Britain on their side in the efforts which they will have to make sooner or later to keep the door open in Persia by this route.

* Not printed.

I do, therefore, trust that this proposal may be pressed in any negotiations with Germany over the Bagdad Railway question.

As regards the proposed railway from Bagdad down the Tigris, I am still at a loss to discover what objects this railway is to serve, unless it be purely strategical objects in relation to the British position on the Persian Gulf. It is surely obvious that all the military requirements of Turkey in policing the Arab tribes between Bagdad and Bussorah and in those regions would be met by steamer transport. The fact that I am engaged in promoting a railway up the valley of the Karun goes to show, I hope, that the opinion I have formed of a railway between Bussorah and Bagdad is not influenced by private considerations. River transport can look after itself alongside of a railway. But if our Government is to be asked to support a railway it ought surely to be made clear that there will be some commercial gain. If the railway is to be built as the result of a further 3 per cent. increase of the customs duties, the result, so far as Manchester goods are concerned, will be that they will have to submit to an additional tax of 60*s.* a ton in order to have the luxury of an alternative route up to Bagdad. Under these circumstances, it would surely be better to go slow as regards this railway and to await the developments of irrigation. Any other course would result in the squandering of vast sums of money raised at the expense of the Turkish tax-payer without conferring any benefits upon British trade—rather the contrary.

Yours sincerely,
H. F. B. LYNCH.

[25903] No. 191.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.

(No. 144.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 22, 1912.*

THE Italian Ambassador informed Sir A. Nicolson on the 10th June that the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs had telegraphed authorising him to give an assurance that if the Turkish garrison at Samos was withdrawn from the island it would not be molested during its passage to the mainland.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[26601] No. 195.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 197.)

(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, June 23, 1912.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Persian delegates have submitted to me and to my Russian colleague draft of their proposed reply to last Turkish argument on explanatory notes (*procès-verbal* No. 5).

Persian delegates in their reply, which is a very lengthy document, after repeating argument that nothing was ever accepted by Persian Government and producing *in extenso* copies of communications, joint and otherwise, of the British and Russian Ministers at Tehran in support of this statement, go on to say: "Persian Government nevertheless accept explanatory note which is decision of two mediating Powers, and which ought to be accepted by both sides on two conditions, namely—(1) That interpretation of said note be in conformity with that already given it by two mediating Powers, and (2) That all decisions which two mediating Powers have taken on frontier between two Mussulman Powers be accepted without exception by two parties."

I have strongly dissuaded Persian delegates from presenting any such document, first, because acceptance by them of these notes at present juncture under any form is, I understand, contrary to wishes of His Majesty's Government, and secondly, because such acceptance would adversely affect position hitherto successfully maintained by Persians, and it would not, coupled as it is with conditions which it is most improbable that Turks will accept, be likely to induce latter to modify the statement made by them in protocols Nos. 3 and 5 that question must go to Hague Tribunal.

I have brought these considerations through Shipley to the notice of the Russian Embassy, with a view to enlisting their support in advice I am giving Persian delegates; but the former, while not refusing their co-operation, seem to fear that

if the first difficulty is not got over, and point goes to Hague Tribunal, it may mean annulment of the treaty and breaking up of the commission, which they desire to prevent by all means possible. I am inclined to think that these fears are premature, and that Persians will not act contrary to my advice; but it might be advisable, after consultation with Russian Government, to request Persian Government to renew their instructions to their delegates not to take any action in regard to acceptance of these notes without further instructions.

[26612] No. 196.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 199.)

Sir, *Constantinople, June 13, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I recently received a petition from the Vice-President of the General Assembly of Samos, copy of which is enclosed herewith, praying that the Turkish troops stationed in the island should be withdrawn, their presence there being contrary to the privileges accorded to the inhabitants under the auspices of Great Britain, France, and Russia in 1832.

This measure of the Samian Government was taken owing to the military preparations of the Turkish garrison to prevent the island from being occupied by the Italians, an occupation which could probably be avoided by the withdrawal of the Turkish troops.

Article 5 of the Organic Charter of 1832 clearly states that there shall be absolutely no troops in the island of Samos, but, owing, no doubt, to various disturbances which had taken place, article 3 of the Vizirial order of the 4th March, 1879, states that . . . . the garrison of fifty men residing in the capital shall be maintained "as in the past."

I am of opinion, and my view is shared by my French and Russian colleagues, that it is useless to raise this question with the Porte while the war is proceeding, and we are considering what reply should be returned to the Samian Government.

M. Bompard has suggested to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on his own behalf that some of the prisoners should be amnestied.

In the meantime, I was informed by the British vice-consul at Samos that 150 men left the island unexpectedly on the 30th ultimo, and in another telegram received from him last night he states that a further batch of 150 men have left for the Asiatic coast; the garrison now remaining numbers about 600 men. It is therefore possible that the Turkish Government may spontaneously withdraw the rest of the troops, and the question will have thus settled itself for the present.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 196.

M. Calotinis to Sir G. Lowther.

Excellence, *Samos, le* 13 (26) *mai*, 1912.

J'AI l'honneur de soumettre ci-inclus à votre Excellence, et en ma qualité de Vice-Président de l'Assemblée générale de Samos, le vote qu'elle a pris à l'unanimité dans la séance du 11 (24) mai, année courante, et dont ci-inclus aussi traduction en français.

Je prie, &c.

ST. J. CALOTINIS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 196.

Samian General Assembly to Sir G. Lowther.

(Traduction.)

Excellence, *Samos, le* 11 (24) *mai*, 1912.

DÉPUTÉS de l'Assemblée générale samienne, interprètes de la pensée commune du peuple de Samos, nous soumettons respectueusement nos sentiments de profonde reconnaissance pour la bienveillance que l'État dont vous êtes le représentant a toujours témoigné aux appels soumis pour les droits et la prospérité de l'île.

Notre patrie jouissant d'une constitution libérale, qui lui a été accordée par la haute protection des trois Puissances protectrices de Samos—Angleterre, France, Russie

—peut réaliser tous les progrès possibles et cherche à se montrer digne de votre haute protection et de votre bienveillance.

Il est bien connu de votre Excellence que parmi les premières dispositions de la constitution garantie par les Puissances protectrices se trouve l'ordonnance que Samos doit être complètement affranchie de la présence des troupes ottomanes. Cette disposition a été fidèlement appliquée jusqu'à l'an 1850, où, sous prétexte de rétablir l'ordre dans le pays, fut envoyée une garnison de troupes. Dès lors les Samiens n'ont cessé de protester. Les Assemblées générales, les Sénats et les commissions envoyées à Constantinople ont représenté au Gouvernement Impérial à plusieurs reprises, et particulièrement en 1854, 1879, 1899 et 1909, l'inutilité et le préjudice du séjour dans l'île de la garnison ottomane.

Malheureusement, la garnison existante n'a pas été rappelée; bien plus, depuis l'année 1908, sous le prétexte de rétablir l'ordre—qui, toutefois, n'avait pas été troublé avant l'arrivée des nouvelles troupes—la garnison a été augmentée considérablement et le pavillon ottoman a été hissé sur le sol samien. Malgré les protestations réitérées des Sénats, contrairement aux firmans Impériaux, édictant que le seul pavillon de la principauté doit être hissé, le pavillon ottoman a été arboré pour la première fois en 1908.

Cette violation de la Charte organique de l'île, garantie par les trois Puissances protectrices—violation qui se manifeste, d'un côté, par la présence des troupes à Samos et, de l'autre, en arborant le drapeau ottoman sur l'île—a porté préjudice à la neutralité dont Samos a le droit de jouir, en raison de sa constitution autonome, garantie par les Puissances.

Devant cette violation pendant la guerre italo-turque actuelle l'un des belligérants, saisissant ce prétexte, et par l'action de sa flotte, a imposé que le pavillon ottoman, hissé contrairement aux prescriptions de la Charte organique de 1832, fût abaissé.

Une action hostile contre la garnison ottomane résidant à Samos paraît imminente, et cette action pourrait entraîner de graves dangers pour la sécurité personnelle, ainsi que pour la fortune des habitants.

Le peuple de Samos, se conformant aux fermes désirs des Hautes Puissances protectrices, est resté jusqu'à ce jour fidèle à l'État suzerain et n'a jamais commis le moindre acte contrairement aux devoirs de vassalité.

Ainsi remplissant nos devoirs fidèlement et nous basant sur la haute bienveillance avec laquelle le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté a comblé notre île, nous nous adressons à votre Excellence, et nous prions instamment de prendre en considération nos droits et de daigner nous protéger dans le but de rétablir la constitution garantie par votre noble Gouvernement et violée par le Gouvernement suzerain. Daignez demander le rappel immédiat de la garnison ottomane résidant à Samos, et qu'il soit interdit à l'avenir de hisser dans l'île le drapeau ottoman. Enfin, qu'il soit recommandé à l'État suzerain d'observer fidèlement désormais les conditions fondamentales par lesquelles est assurée la constitution autonome.

Ainsi le peuple samien, qui jouit en paix des privilèges octroyés et garantis par les trois Grandes Puissances, aura, de nouveau, motifs pour exprimer sa respectueuse gratitude.

De votre Excellence les très humbles et dévoués, les députés des villes et villages de l'île de Samos:

[Here follow signatures.]

[26620] No. 197.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 507.)

Sir, *Constantinople, June 17, 1912.*

INDIFFERENT as the Turkish Government and people have so far shown themselves to be to the occupation by Italy of various islands in the Ægean, the local press has during the last few days shown some perturbation as regards the probable effect of this occupation upon the Greek inhabitants. The "Tania" is puzzled to find Italy on the one hand installing herself as if for a permanent stay in the captured islands, on the other promising the islanders autonomy on her evacuation—a promise which she has no power to fulfil on her own initiative without the consent of the other Powers and of Turkey herself—and adding that she will guarantee Turkey's integrity if Turkey will recognise the annexation of Tripoli.

Both the "Tanin" and the "Hakk" urge the Greek populations not to allow themselves to be blinded by the specious promises made to them with the object of setting them against their Turkish countrymen. They are reminded that since the days of the Conquest the Turks have been kind and tolerant to them, and they are asked what they can expect to gain by a change at Constantinople. Were there a question of restoring the Greek, Roman, or Byzantine Empires the matter would be different, but if Turkey is absorbed by one or more European Powers, what have the Greeks to expect but the loss of language, religion, traditions, and nationality. The pan-Hellenic revival at Athens has made an absurd impression in Europe, and it is not to be supposed for a moment that Italy really means to make a present of any of the islands to Greece; the Ottoman Greeks are therefore advised to consider their own true interests, to reject these shadowy advances, and to throw in their lot heart and soul with that of Turkey.

Assim Bey to-day told me that the Italian policy in this connection was to rouse the Greek islanders to indulge in anti-Turkish demonstrations in order to compromise them in the eyes of the Turkish Government, in order that when the time came for restoring the islands to Turkey it might be argued that a simple restoration to the old position would expose the Christian inhabitants to the vengeance of their Moslem compatriots, and his Excellency said that the Italian Minister in Athens was specially active in promoting this policy.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[26625] No. 198.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 511.)
Sir, *Constantinople, June 18, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 56 of the 19th January last, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Erzeroum respecting the grant of a concession for working a new lignite mine in the Baiburt kaza.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 198.

Consul Monahan to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 33.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, June 7, 1912.*

WITH reference to Mr. McGregor's despatch No. 3 of the 6th January, 1912, I have the honour to report that the "Enver Sharkie," the official gazette of the vilayet, of the 6th instant, publishes the text of the Imperial firman of the 31st November (n.s.), 1911, granting to six Mussulmans, all apparently tradesmen of Surmeneh, near Trebizond, the exclusive right of working for ninety-nine years a lignite mine on land equal to 110 jeribs (the jerib, I am informed, being 2½ acres) in the kaza of Baiburt, which land is, I am informed, in the immediate neighbourhood of Baiburt town. The firman sets forth fees and taxes to be paid to Government under the mining law, a minimum of 3,000 piastres per annum being payable as tax on the crude output, and further states that 1 per cent. export duty on lignite exported to Europe shall always be levied even though export duties in general are abolished, and 5 paras per 100 piastres shall be payed on the cleaned lignite to the charitable institution called the Dar-ul-Ajiz in Stamboul. Work must be commenced within two years from the date (apparently) of the firman, article 71 of the mining laws shall be applied to cases of non-Ottomans being employed at the mine in capacities other than those of engineer or foreman, and the concessionnaires shall have no right to compensation for damage caused by construction of military roads or works, or by any military movements. Specifications of cleaning plant, &c., must first be submitted to the Ministry of Mines.

A person likely to be well informed tells me that the mine is not promising, and has been to a great extent spoiled by the above-mentioned six individuals, who have been working it under a "permis de recherche."

This is not one of the mines for which capital has been sought in Paris (see Mr. McGregor's despatch above referred to).

I have for the present no further information about this mine, but will endeavour to obtain some.

I have, &c.
J. H. MONAHAN.

[26628] No. 199.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 514.)
Sir, *Constantinople, June 17, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 499 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to forward to you herewith copies of two despatches from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna, transmitting translations of a resolution of the Samos Chamber of Deputies proposing that a general amnesty be granted to those condemned for political offences since the disturbances of 1908, and reporting further on the situation in Samos since the return of M. Sofoulis.

You will see from these despatches that, in addition to the pan-Hellenic agitation, which has been revived among the Greeks of the islands by Italy's occupation of a number of them and by her rumoured promises of autonomy and other favours to their inhabitants, the return of exiles like M. Sofoulis is only likely to produce more restlessness and intrigue, which will almost certainly result in hostility towards Turkish rule in the isles, and I do not therefore propose to contribute to that end by supporting at the Porte the Prince of Samos' request for the grant of an Imperial amnesty.

I have just received a telegram from Mr. Barnham stating that a proclamation was issued on the 15th instant at Samos granting such an amnesty to all persons, except M. Sofoulis, who were condemned to death on account of the 1908 disturbances.

The exception made in M. Sofoulis' case may perhaps be explained by his prompt renewal of agitation on reaching Samos from Athens, and has no doubt been the immediate cause of his intended departure for Rhodes.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 199.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 73.)
Sir, *Smyrna, June 11, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies, with translation, of a resolution passed by the Chamber of Deputies at Samos, proposing that a general amnesty be granted to those condemned for political offences since the disturbances of 1908, together with copy of an address to the Prince Governor urging him to give effect to the resolution of his own initiative.

The Prince has, however, referred the question to the Sublime Porte, and Mr. Vice-Consul Marc states that the Prince would be glad of your Excellency's support in obtaining the grant of an Imperial amnesty.

Some of my colleagues have already received copies of these documents, and submitted them to their respective embassies.

I myself feel considerable doubt as to the wisdom of allowing such men as Sofoulis and Nicolaides to return to public life. Unless the new Prince Governor is a man of strong independent character he will inevitably become an instrument in their hands.

They are disloyal to the Porte, and since the occupation of the Sporades by the Italians will find a wide field for intrigue, aiming probably at one of two alternatives—the union of the Sporades with Samos under an autonomy, or the union of all the islands, including Samos, with Greece.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 199.

Samos Chamber of Deputies to the Governor.

(Translation.)

Highness,

WE have the honour to submit to your Highness for execution the annexed resolution, voted unanimously by the Assembly in its ordinary sitting to-day.

Your Highness cannot be ignorant of the fact that in voting this resolution the Assembly acted in accordance with the unanimous wish of the entire people of Samos without exception, and that without this measure it will be impossible to restore order in the island.

Therefore we do not doubt in the least that your Highness, who from the very first recognised this measure as just and beneficial, will unhesitatingly proceed to the execution of the resolution in accordance with the statutory law of our country, since amnesty for offences (committed) in Samos is a right belonging to the country, never disputed, and often applied.

Nor can it be seriously maintained that in voting this resolution the Assembly exceeded its rights, seeing that no provision of the Charter prescribes that amnesty is the exclusive right of the executive and outside the jurisdiction of the Legislative Power. Nor is it permissible, according to our Statutory Charter, to refuse the execution of such a resolution, since it constitutes no violation of the loyalty and subjection which we owe to the Sovereign State.

On the other hand, not to sanction this resolution would constitute a downright violation of the self-governing laws of our country, and place us under the necessity of protesting to the Powers who have guaranteed and are protecting our independence against the violation of the rights and privileges of the country.

(The Plenipotentiaries.)

Enclosure 3 in No. 199.

Resolution of the General Assembly of the Samiotes, voted unanimously at the Sitting of May 7, 1912 (o.s.).

(Translation.)

A GENERAL amnesty shall be granted to all those who were sentenced under article 34 of the sentence pronounced by the Criminal Court of Samos on the 17th September, 1908, as well as to Nicolas Moros, with respect to all acts imputed to them from the 11th May, 1908, to the 30th March, 1912, these persons being at the same time restored to all their civil and political rights.

His Highness the Prince is requested to put into execution the present resolution, which has been voted within the terms of the jurisdiction of the Assembly prescribed by the Charter of Privileges, and does not contravene their obligation of fidelity and submission to the Sovereign State.

(The Plenipotentiaries.)

Enclosure 4 in No. 199.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 77.)

Sir, *Smyrna, June 15, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 73 of the 11th instant, transmitting copy of a resolution of the Samos Chamber of Deputies, it would appear that M. Sofoulis has been granted the Imperial pardon because Mr. Vice-Consul Marc reports his return to Samos from Athens, and states that on his arrival at Vathy he became the object of extraordinary popular demonstrations.

Mr. Marc reports that a great meeting took place on the 9th instant, when M. Sofoulis and the Senators were called upon to take up the question of the withdrawal of the Turkish troops from Samos.

In this agitation the new Prince Governor appears to be ignored, for he informed Mr. Marc that he deplored it, but could not interfere.

M. Sofoulis intended to leave for Rhodes on the following Wednesday to meet the Italian Military Governor and discuss the "proposed establishment of a principality including the islands of the Sporades and Samos."

I have, &c.

HENRY D. BARNHAM.

[26642]

No. 200.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 527.)

Sir, *Constantinople, June 19, 1912.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 241 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from Dr. Clemow pointing out the disastrous effect which would be produced on the finances of the Constantinople Board of Health by the Italian Government taking over the Camaran lazaret.

I would venture to call your serious attention to the contents of this despatch, and trust that it may be found possible to bring home to the Italian Government the very forcible arguments adduced by Dr. Clemow against any such action that may have been contemplated. In addition to inflicting a serious blow on the Board of Health itself, it would injure neutral Powers far more than the Turks, and would cause unnecessary irritation against the Italian Government without bringing them any appreciable advantage.

I need perhaps hardly call your attention to the fact that the measure proposed will still further retard the reduction of the sanitary dues, which it was hoped was in a fair way to being definitely settled.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 200.

Dr. Clemow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 69.)

Sir, *Constantinople, June 18, 1912.*

WITH reference to the Foreign Office despatch No. 241 of the 7th instant, respecting the statement of the Italian Government that they contemplate taking over the administration of the Camaran lazaret during the war, I have the honour to report as follows:—

Any such action as that contemplated by Italy must inevitably cause serious complications and heavy loss to the funds of the Board of Health. Camaran is one of the principal and largest of the lazarets administered by that body, and its "quarantine" funds are largely dependent on the income from the Camaran lazaret. This is abundantly shown by the following figures:—

Year.	Total Quarantine Income.	Camaran Receipts.	Percentage.
	Piastres.		
1906–7	3,476,518	1,769,114	About 51
1907–8	4,408,970	2,038,872	„ 46
1908–9	3,296,929	1,462,129	„ 44
1909–10	2,571,151	1,695,116	„ 66
1910–11	6,376,159	1,968,328	„ 30
Totals	20,129,757	8,938,559	44·38

It will be seen from these figures that Camaran furnished between £ T. 16,000 and £ T. 17,000 per annum, and that this constituted 44·38 per cent. of the total "quarantine" income of the Board. Assuming that the Italians took over the lazaret, it must follow that there will be a dead loss to the Board of something like £ T. 16,000. Nor can it be assumed that there will be a compensating gain in a reduction of expenditure at Camaran. For, firstly, the annual mission has already started; the cost of their outward and return journeys will have to be paid, and this is a heavy item in the total; and, moreover, their pay will still go on, as also that of the large permanent staff, for it would be impossible to find posts for them all—or for any large proportion of them—elsewhere. And, secondly, the state of war and the interference with the communications of Camaran have already led to a great increase in the cost of living there; demands for increased pay have been received from the

staff of the lazaret, and the Board has already decided to grant such increase, leaving the amount to be proposed by its personal committee. It is as certain, therefore, as anything can be that the taking over of the lazaret by the Italians would lead to an enormous loss to the Board, possibly even greater than the figure mentioned above.

It has further to be pointed out that this loss will in no sense fall on Turkey. For the last three years the Turkish Government has refused to contribute anything more than the 500,000 piastres for up-keep of lazarets and a sum for the hire of sanitary offices. It will pay this in any case, and no more, whether the quarantine account shows a deficit or not, and the deficit that it would certainly show if Camaran were to be taken over by Italy would have to be borne by the general funds of the Board.

I have referred in a previous despatch to the fact that at Camaran the overwhelming proportion of pilgrims are non-Ottomans. I may supplement what I then wrote by the following figures:—

Year.	Total Pilgrims.	Indians.	Javanese and other Malays.	Ottomans.
1906-7..	44,334	25,202	11,897	3,871
1907-8..	37,962	18,168	12,578	2,490
1908-9..	30,675	13,458	12,663	1,307
1909-10	36,357	17,302	12,827	1,593
1910-11	37,300	15,110	16,042	2,144
Totals	186,628	87,540 = 46·9 per cent.	65,107 = 35·1 per cent.	11,135
		= 82 per cent.		= 6 per cent.

Only 6 per cent. of the receipts at Camaran were therefore paid, on an average, by Ottoman subjects; 82 per cent. were contributed by British and Dutch pilgrims; and 12 per cent. by others. It is difficult to see what Italy can hope to gain by taking over this lazaret, or what Turkey stands to lose by her doing so, except in the way of prestige.

There is another aspect of the question which also, I venture to think, requires consideration. The Camaran lazaret is to all intents and purposes an international rather than a Turkish institution. It was created by international agreement; it is supported by funds levied under an international arrangement, as the result of the labours of successive mixed commissions; and not only the construction and detailed organisation of the lazaret, but also the measures to be applied there, were originally laid down and repeatedly endorsed by successive international sanitary conventions, to which all the Powers interested in the pilgrimage were parties. Those Powers agreed to send their pilgrims there, and to allow them to undergo the measures in question, on the condition that the lazaret was administered by the Board of Health of Constantinople, on which they were represented by delegates. The taking over of the lazaret by Italy would cut straight across these various international agreements, conventions, and arrangements.

It may possibly be advanced that His Majesty's Government have always openly held that the Board of Health is a Turkish body, and not an international institution. But it has always to be borne in mind that they have also invariably recognised the independence of the Board in the matter of finance. This has been clearly stipulated by the conventions following the mixed commissions, where it has been repeatedly laid down that "la gestion des fonds, recettes, dépenses et réformes est exclusivement confiée au Conseil de Santé," and this has been as fully accepted by His Majesty's Government as by the other Powers. It may consequently be asked whether it is admissible that a single Power should take over by force the administration, and consequently the income, of one of the Board's principal lazarets, thus dealing a serious blow to international interests, and robbing what is, fiscally, an undoubtedly international body of an important part of its revenue, without injuring in any real sense the country at which the blow is supposed to be aimed.

I have, &c.
F. G. CLEMOW.

[24958] No. 201.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 24, 1912.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, respecting the Turkish occupation of Kasr-es-Subaih, and I am to inform you that he concurs in the view of the Secretary of State for India, as expressed in the final paragraph of your letter.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[25555] No. 202.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 24, 1912.*

WITH reference to Foreign Office letter of the 23rd May relative to your company's barges on the Tigris, I am directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to inform you that, according to a despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, His Majesty's consul at Bussorah has reported that the vali addressed a letter to him on the 28th ultimo, in which permission is expressly given to tow two barges for the sole and exclusive purpose of carrying 3,800 tons of accumulated cargo.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[26544] No. 203.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Louther.

(No. 270.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 25, 1912.*

THE Turkish Ambassador called on the 19th June and showed Sir A. Nicolson a telegram from Assim Bey, enquiring whether the Greek Minister here had made any representations as to the future status of the Ægean Islands, and as to their being accorded autonomy or union with Greece. Sir A. Nicolson told him that M. Gennadius had not to his knowledge made any representations in this sense. The telegram was a lengthy protest against any alteration being made in the status of the islands, should such ever be contemplated.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[27486] No. 204.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

(No. 154.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 25, 1912.*

IN the course of conversation with the German Ambassador to-day, I said that I was sure he knew more about the Bagdad Railway than I did; but I should like to tell him how matters stood, so that I might be certain that my version of some points was correct.

The Turkish Government claimed that, as the concession beyond Bagdad had been given back to them by Germany in return for the Alexandretta concession, they were entitled to negotiate about it; and they desired that, while we negotiated with them, we should not negotiate with any one else. On this footing we were negotiating; but I understood that Germany, though relinquishing to Turkey the concession beyond Bagdad, had reserved the right to an equal participation with any other individual foreign capital.

The Ambassador said that the correct way of expressing the situation was that the Bagdad Railway Company had agreed to transfer the concession beyond Bagdad to

another company, but German participation must be as great as that of any other capital except Turkish, and some indemnity was to be allowed to the Bagdad Railway Company for more difficult portions of the line; but he did not disagree that, in substance, the Turkish Government were entitled to negotiate as they were doing. He added that he understood the Turks now proposed that the railway should stop at Bussorah.

I said that, as far as that point was concerned, we would acquiesce.

The Ambassador then dwelt upon the Turkish objections to Russian capital, and said that they were natural, as Turkey suspected a political motive in everything which Russia did.

I replied that we were aware of these objections, and the question of participation was not arranged. I proposed to continue negotiating with the Turks alone, as they desired; but, if participation was arranged for the railway, the matter would then of course have to be discussed with Germany, and in any case I would tell him if the negotiations broke down and came to nothing, or what the final result was.

The Ambassador expressed satisfaction at this.

For the rest, I said that what we desired was to be sure of a *status quo* in the Gulf that would not be disturbed.

He observed that we already had an agreement with Turkey as to the preservation of the *status quo* in Koweit, but no doubt there was always discussion as to what the *status quo* was. He dwelt upon the impossibility of there being any differential duties without requiring certificates of origin.

I said that it was feared that rates might be high on goods in which we were specially interested and low on goods in which Germany was interested.

The Ambassador replied that this would be impossible under any "cahier des charges."

Finally, I said that the "crux" of the whole matter was the 4 per cent. increase of Turkish customs dues. We could not agree to this without being able to satisfy Parliament that the *status quo* in the Persian Gulf was secure; that it was settled where the Bagdad Railway was to end, and on what conditions; and that there would be no differential rates.

The Ambassador took no exception to any of the points raised. In the course of the conversation he observed that he had always said that the Bagdad Railway could not be carried to the Gulf without agreement with us, and that this view had been more readily accepted at Constantinople than in Berlin.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[26612] No. 205.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 261.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, June 26, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 80 of 18th June.

Has the Minister for Foreign Affairs said anything more about Samos? What are his views as to informing the Porte that, if they withdraw the garrison, the island will not be occupied by the Italians?

Sir G. Lowther reports that 300 men have been withdrawn, and that it is possible that the Porte may spontaneously withdraw the rest.

(Repeated to Constantinople, No. 345.)

[24009] No. 206.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 26, 1912.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant respecting the proposed Riverain Commission for the Shatt-el-Arab, as well as various telegrams on the same subject which have been received by the

[27375] No. 207*.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received June 27.)

(Confidential.)

Admiralty, June 26, 1912.

Sir,

WITH reference to your letter of the 10th ultimo and previous correspondence concerning the negotiations now pending with Turkey, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to request that you will suggest to the Secretary of State that, in the event of the proposed Riverain Commission for the Shatt-el-Arab being established, the desirability of British naval interests being directly represented on this commission should be borne in mind.

2. If for any reason the selection of a naval officer as principal British member were not considered appropriate, it is, in my Lords' opinion, very necessary that a naval officer should at least be associated with the commission.

I am, &c.

W. GRAHAM GREENE.

Secretary of State for India from the Government of India and the British Resident in the Persian Gulf.

I am to inform you that Sir E. Grey concurs in the second paragraph of your above-mentioned letter, subject to the important reservation that His Majesty's Government cannot be held liable, under the terms of existing assurances to the Sheikh of Mohammerah, to guarantee the continuance of the sheikh's jurisdiction of a tribal character on the Turkish or right bank of the Shatt-el-Arab if, as is not impossible, objections are raised on the part of the Turkish Government.

As you are aware, Sir E. Grey is advised that the claim of Persia to mid-channel cannot, in view of the wording of the Treaty of Erzeroum, be successfully upheld, and he does not consider that Sir P. Cox has produced any argument that shakes the interpretation put upon article 2 of the Treaty of Erzeroum (1847) by His Majesty's Government.

If, contrary to the wish and expectation of His Majesty's Government, the Mohammerah question were to be referred to The Hague Tribunal, Sir E. Grey has little doubt that the whole waterway would be assigned to Turkey; and, in these circumstances, he concludes that it is preferable for the interests on the river of the Sheikh of Mohammerah and the Persian Government to be entrusted to the Riverain Commission, constituted as proposed, rather than to the arbitrary control of the Turkish authorities. He considers that this aspect of the question, if properly represented, could hardly fail to appeal to the sagacity of the sheikh.

Sir E. Grey agrees that a clause might be added to the proposed Riverain Convention, as suggested in your letter of the 4th June, to the effect that nothing in the convention shall derogate from the rights enjoyed by Persia under article 2 of the Treaty of Erzeroum, and that it shall be the duty of the British member to make such representations to the commission as may at any time be necessary upon any question affecting the interests of Persia or the Sheikh of Mohammerah.

He considers that there is reason to apprehend objections on the part of foreign Powers to the levy of dues by the commission, and that it might, in accordance with the original suggestion made by Admiral Sir A. K. Wilson to the Committee of Imperial Defence in 1911, be advisable that no dues should be levied by the commission for the first two years, during which the expense might be borne by the Turkish Government and His Majesty's Government, and that His Majesty's Government might facilitate the advance of such funds as might be requisite for the expenditure of the commission, subject to satisfactory arrangements as to repayment.

But Sir E. Grey would be glad if this subject and various other points (such as the ownership of islands) might be further considered by the committee who drew up the draft convention.

I am, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[27314] No. 207.

Trans-Atlantic Trust Company to Foreign Office.—(Received June 27.)

Sir, 550, *Salisbury House, London, June* 26, 1912.

IN further reference to our conversation of this date, would you kindly consider the following question relative to our possible negotiations for building a railway from the port of Yumurtalyk to Lake Van and thence to Suleimanie:—

Would His Majesty's Foreign Office offer any opposition or objection to the building of the proposed railroad (which will cross the Bagdad road) if financed by British capital, or partly British, partly French, and partly American?

We are, &c.

(*Per* the Trans-Atlantic Trust Company, Limited),

F. LOWRY LIGHTFOOT.

[27401] No. 208.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 87.)
(Telegraphic.) *Paris, June 27, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 261 of yesterday evening.

I have not received communication from French Minister for Foreign Affairs relative to Samos since 18th June.

I have seen political director this morning. French Minister for Foreign Affairs has never been approached directly on the subject of Samos; it was to Russian Ambassador and not to Italian Ambassador, as reported in my telegram No. 80 of 18th June, that French Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that he would consider the communication concerning Samos. Political director supposes that the communication was inspired by the Italian Ambassador at Paris, or perhaps made by instructions from St. Petersburgh as a feeler. French Minister for Foreign Affairs' answer to M. Isvolsky was a polite mode of shelving the question. His Excellency had not received any further communication on the subject from Russian Government or Ambassador, and he has had no reason to change the views which he expressed in his private letter to me of 4th June, copy of which was enclosed in my despatch No. 252 of 5th June to you.

Political director said that French Government are greatly preoccupied as to the eventual outcome of the Italian occupation of the Turkish islands, and are anxious as to what might happen in Samos in the event of the entire withdrawal of the Turkish garrison. He enquired whether any representation had been made to you by the Italian Government regarding Samos.

[27538] No. 209.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 229.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *St. Petersburgh, June 28, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 534 of 27th June.

I have this morning received an *aide-mémoire* from the Russian Government expressing opinion that it would be prudent to advise Persian delegates to accept "explanatory note" on condition that its meaning is interpreted by mediating Powers, and that Turks, on their side, recognise validity of decisions on other points which have been given by Russia and England in the past, and especially that of identic map drawn up by mediating commissioners. Reasons given by the Russian Government for their opinion are roughly those stated in Sir G. Lowther's telegram No. 197 of 23rd June, paragraph 6, beginning "I have brought," and the *aide-mémoire* suggests that interpretation of the explanatory note might be in the sense of the reassuring explanations given to the Persian Government by Colonel Sheil.

Russian Government ask that instructions in the above sense should be sent to the British representatives at Tehran and Constantinople.

I am unable to see Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day owing to his absence from St. Petersburgh, but will act on your instructions to-morrow.

[28231] No. 210.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.

(No. 148.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 28, 1912.*

THE Italian Ambassador told me to-day that reports were being put about which he was sure was false, but of which he had made a list, and would tell me. They were:—

1. That we had assured the Turks that they need not be anxious about the Ægean islands, as these would revert to Turkey unchanged after the war.

I said that this was absolutely untrue. We had not said anything to the Turkish Government about the islands. All I had done was to observe, in conversation with some of the Ambassadors of other Powers, that the settlement of the question of the islands at the end of the war would present difficulties.

In this the Italian Ambassador agreed.

2. That Lord Kitchener was contemplating the occupation of the harbour of Bardia, a harbour which, I gathered, is beyond the Sollum boundary of Egypt.

I said that there was not a word of truth in our contemplating a move beyond the boundary at Sollum, as suggested in the rumour, and that I had never before heard even the name of Bardia.

3. That Great Britain had approached the Powers with a view to the recognition of the annexation of Tripoli by Italy, under the religious supremacy of the Sultan, Cyrenaica to remain under Ottoman rule, with other details of the same sort. The Ambassador gave me an extract from the "Daily Chronicle" to this effect.

I said that we had not made any proposal whatever about Cyrenaica. With regard to the religious supremacy of the Sultan, the only possible foundation for the rumour would be what I had said to Count Benckendorff about a possible annual payment to the Sheikh-ul-Islam, a suggestion which I had made in concert with the Italian Ambassador, and of which I had told him at the time. The Ambassador said, of course, he knew all about this.

4. That Baron Marschall had begun negotiations with us to settle the questions of the Bagdad Railway and the harbour of Alexandretta as Germany desired, we in return to receive the annexation of Cyrenaica to Egypt.

I said that I had never discussed Cyrenaica with Baron Marschall, nor coupled the question of the Bagdad Railway, or any other question in Asia Minor, with the Italian-Turkish war in any way; and he had not made any such proposal to me. Our discussion of the war had really been limited to an agreement that the Italian decree of annexation was a great obstacle to peace.

The Italian Ambassador had, I found, already had conversation with Baron Marschall, and was aware of the strength of his language about the Italian decree of annexation.

5. That the French and British Governments had assured the Grand Vizier that they would under no circumstances recognise the Italian annexation of Tripoli.

I said that nothing of this sort had been said by us to the Grand Vizier.

6. That the stopping of contraband on the Egyptian frontier being very expensive, Lord Kitchener intended to give more freedom for the passage of officers and arms.

I said that no change whatever had been suggested by Lord Kitchener, or by us to him; he had not even mentioned the inconvenience of expense. It was true that the Khedive, in conversation with me the other day, had mentioned the expense of maintaining extra police on the frontier as an instance of the inconvenience of the war to Egypt. I had admitted the inconvenience, but had pointed out that, altogether apart from our occupation, neutrality was the only policy for Egypt, as the Turkish fleet could not protect it from being attacked by Italy, and that therefore the obligations of neutrality must be preserved. On the quite new point as to the prohibition of money passing through Egypt, it did seem to me, after studying the documents, that to treat money as contraband would be to go beyond the international treaty obligations of neutrality.

The Ambassador argued that, as money was of very great importance, it was inconsistent with the spirit of the treaty obligations to allow it to pass.

I said that I could not admit that money was contraband. I added that the obligations of neutrality had been interpreted at least as strictly in Egypt as in Tunis or elsewhere.

To this the Ambassador assented.

I explained that to go beyond treaty obligations would be to cease to be neutral.

The Italian Ambassador expressed explicit confidence in what I had said, and he repeated that he had been sure from the first that none of these rumours were true. But he thought that some very malign agency was at work in spreading them, and he was anxious that I should take some opportunity of contradicting some of them publicly, especially numbers 1 and 3.

I said that never in the whole course of my experience had I met with rumours more absolutely without foundation than these, and never before had I had anything like the same number of false reports presented to me in one day.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[28232] No. 211.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.

(No. 149.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 28, 1912.

THE Italian Ambassador informed me to-day that special instructions had been sent to the Italian naval authorities in the Ægean Sea to interfere as little as possible with British ships, and to show special regard to them.

I expressed satisfaction, and said that I had already heard of the instructions sent with regard to the pilgrim traffic.

The Ambassador said that, in this connection, he had received a statement about the lazaret at Camaran that he would send to me.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[28233] No. 212.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd.

(No. 150.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 28, 1912.

THE Italian Ambassador, for my information, told me to-day, with reference to the alleged pledge given by the Italian general in Rhodes, that the population of the occupied islands would never go back under Turkish rule, that as a matter of fact the general had given orders not to permit any meeting which was incompatible with the state of war, and had urged the mayor of Rhodes to deprecate all political manifestation. The general had also announced that he could not receive any resolution of a political character. All this had been approved by the Italian Government.

On the 17th instant ten persons had met in Patmos, calling themselves representatives of the islands occupied by Italy. They had passed a resolution of gratitude to the Italians, expressed national aspirations towards Greece, and had asked for complete autonomy, based on supposed declarations of the Italian general and admiral. These persons had no official character; the mayor took no part in the meeting; the Greek vice-consul had organised it, having come after the Italian occupation for this purpose; the delegates would not be received by the general, and the latter had stated that he had never mentioned the word "autonomy."

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[27642] No. 213.

Tewfik Pasha to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 29.)

(Confidentielle.)

TEVFIK PACHA présente ses compliments à Sir E. Grey et, se référant à la note confidentielle de son Excellence du 10 mai dernier, a l'honneur de l'informer que les autorités de Bassora, auxquelles des éclaircissements ont été demandés sur la question traitée par ladite note, font savoir que des négociations n'ont jamais été entamées avec une maison britannique pour le drainage de l'embouchure du Chatt-el-Arab, mais qu'un projet comprenant les embellissements et œuvres d'utilité publique à effectuer éventuellement à Bassora avait été dressé et remis à des capitalistes indigènes et étrangers de Bassora, et un article de ce projet visait la question du drainage du canal de Fay, de Chatt-el-Arab et de leurs affluents, et que, du reste, aucune offre n'avait été faite pour entreprendre l'exécution de ce plan.

La question à laquelle fait allusion la note de son Excellence Sir E. Grey est probablement le résultat d'une interprétation erronée de ces intentions des autorités de Bassora.

Ambassade Impériale ottomane, Londres,
le 28 *juin*, 1912.

[27623] No. 214.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 29.)

Sir, *India Office, June* 28, 1912.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to refer to the letter of this Office, dated the 21st June, 1912, communicating copy of the telegram of the Government of India, dated the 20th idem, regarding British participation in the Persian Gulf section of the Bagdad Railway and other matters, and in reply to offer the following observations:—

Attention is invited to the fact that views have now formally been expressed by the Government of India in favour of British participation in the Persian Gulf section to the extent of 50 per cent. This matter has been already dealt with in my letters of the 21st May and the 10th June, 1912. Similarly, as regards the territorial questions referred to in the telegram, I am to call attention to what was said in my letter of the 18th June, 1912.

The question of the specification attached to the Bagdad Railway convention is not, it will be seen, touched upon in the telegram of the Government of India; it may be assumed that a further communication will be received from them when their examination of the matter is complete.

There remains the question of the draft convention for setting up a Riverain Commission in the Shatt-el-Arab. The telegrams received from Sir P. Cox on this subject, dated the 29th May and the 4th June, were enclosed in the letters of this Office, dated the 4th and 7th June respectively, and it was explained in the penultimate paragraph of the former letter that the views of the Government of India would in due course be communicated. These views, it will be seen, are in general accord with those expressed by Sir P. Cox, but reason has been shown in the letter last referred to why for the present at any rate they are inadmissable, and the Marquess of Crewe has little to add to what he has said already upon this subject.

As regards the policing of the river, I am to say that one of the objects of the proposed convention is to remove as far as possible all opportunity and excuse for intervention and obstruction on the part of the local authorities, who often are—or are conveniently represented to be—imperfectly controlled by the Central Government. From this point of view it is most desirable that the maintenance of order should be in the hands of such a semi-independent body as the commission, acting in direct subordination to the Porte itself. In reply to the argument that, "since the policing of the river must include the suppression of piracy," those duties must continue in the hands of the local authorities, Lord Crewe is disposed to think that with the increasing development of commerce and navigation in the Shatt-el-Arab, the suppression of piracy will assume a subordinate aspect, and may safely be left to the commission; but it might possibly be arranged that some police functions should be performed by the Sheikh of Mohammerah under the authority and supervision of the commission.

As regards the approaches of the Shatt-el-Arab, it was thought preferable by the interdepartmental committee which drafted the convention that the limits of the commission's control should not be defined in the manner suggested by the Government of India, and clause 17 of the final draft (which the Government of India do not seem to have had before them when they telegraphed) was thought to provide sufficient safeguard. But there are obvious advantages in defining once for all the limits of territorial waters if the Turkish Government can be brought to abandon the extravagant claims which they are understood to entertain.

In this connection it is very desirable that it should be formally laid down that the channel over the whole of which the Turkish jurisdiction is now to be admitted should be the channel at low water—that is to say, that all land between high and low water marks on the Persian bank will belong to Persia. From this it will follow that islands connected with the Persian bank at low water will be Persian, and one of the difficulties foreseen by Sir P. Cox will thus be removed. This stipulation will perhaps be more conveniently made in the negotiations regarding the frontier than in the convention setting up the Riverain Commission.

If it is thought that the Turkish Government can effectively prevent the British representative from corresponding direct with his Government, it is desirable to secure this right for him in the convention. But as he will be a servant of the Porte it will presumably not be possible for him to speak in the name of the British Government.

In paragraph 6 of my letter of the 4th instant it was suggested that the British member should be expressly empowered to represent the interests of Mohammerah when necessary. This is important also for the purpose of allotting the proceeds of the consolidated dues to be levied by the commission, since, as pointed out by Sir P. Cox in the telegram of the 4th April, the major part of the shipping affected will be that plying to the ports of Mohammerah and Abadan. But, incidentally, this raises the difficulty mentioned by Sir P. Cox in his telegram of the 6th May, of the constitutional position of the sheikh, and appears to necessitate, at some stage of the negotiations, a communication to the Persian Government. Sir E. Gery will, no doubt consider when and in what form this can best be made, but Lord Crewe would suggest that it is desirable that it should not be made until the negotiations with Turkey have reached a point at which no action or inaction on the part of Persia can disturb them, and that, in the first instance, the sheikh should be regarded as the party primarily concerned.

I have, &c.

R. RITCHIE.

[27653] No. 215.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 231.)
(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, June 29, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 542 of 29th June.

I spoke to Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day as instructed. He said that he was most anxious to assist His Majesty's Government in every possible way in regard to Mohammerah question. At the same time it must be remembered that Russian Government were deeply interested in an arrangement respecting northern portion of frontier being arrived at between Persian and Turkish delegates such as would be satisfactory to Russia. He was afraid that if Persian delegates postponed their acceptance of explanatory note "for some weeks" there was a serious danger that commission would not be able to come to a complete agreement within the six months' time specified in protocol of 21st December, 1911, with result that Turks would insist on a reference to The Hague. He urged importance of Mohammerah question being settled and of commission approaching question of northern part of line. I pointed out that Turkish Government would probably not acquiesce in conditions which Persian delegates proposed to attach to their acceptance of explanatory note, so that proposed course was not likely to expedite matters.

As, however, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs maintained his objections to a further delay of some weeks, and as our interview was necessarily short owing to his having a pressing engagement, I asked whether he would telegraph instructions to Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to advise Persian delegates to suspend their proposed communication to Ottoman delegates until British and Russian Governments should have had time to come to an agreement on question. This he promised to do.

I understand M. Minorsky has urged on Persian delegates necessity of taking up consideration of more northerly frontier, but without success.

[27659] No. 216.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 77.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Naples, June 30, 1912.*

PILGRIM traffic in Red Sea.

Italian Government consider it would be of greatest assistance to them in measures they desire to take to facilitate traffic if shipping companies could, through consular agents, keep British Embassy here informed in good time of names and other indications of identity of ships conveying pilgrims to and from Red Sea ports.

Despatch following.

[27654] No. 217.

Mr. O'Beirne to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 232. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, June 30, 1912.*

MY immediately preceding telegram of 29th June.

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed to me great anxiety regarding question of northern portion of frontier. He said that, while Russia could scarcely hope to obtain a complete return to *status quo* of 1905, it was entirely out of the question that she should allow Turks to retain certain positions now occupied by them near Urmia. He still believed that if question went to Hague Tribunal Turkey might make good her claims to these districts. He was therefore anxious to avoid a reference to The Hague, and he attached great importance to the Persian delegates avoiding giving Turks a pretext for declaring that they declined to abide by the Treaty of Erzeroum.

He said that he was ready to join His Majesty's Government in any pressure which they might think necessary to apply to Turks in regard to Mohammerah, and he earnestly trusted that His Majesty's Government would do as much for Russia towards the north.

Minister for Foreign Affairs is not unnaturally apprehensive lest after a settlement has been reached about Mohammerah Turkish delegates should act so as to force arbitration on other parts of the frontier question.